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LETTER

TO

The Rt. Hon. LORD GRENVILLE.

A

LETTER

TO

The Rt. Hon. LORD GRENVILLE,

ONE OF

HIS MAJESTY's PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE, &c.

IN WHICH THE

PRESENT STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION

IS CONSIDERED,

BOTH POSITIVELY, AND IN COMPARISON WITH

THE

PRESENT STATE

OF THE

FRENCH NATION.

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M.DCC.XCIII.

LETTER

FROM THE Hon. LORD GRENVILLE,

TO THE

HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE, &c.

TO THE

MY LORD

PRESENT STATE

[illegible] about to be asked by [illegible] [illegible] in the struggle of humanized [illegible] for every thing short of existence itself, [illegible] and honorable, in a degree that [illegible] greater or smaller, in proportion as your [illegible] conduct happens to manifest more, or less, that good sense, and that becoming vaguity, which it has of late been strongly marked [illegible] must be some propriety in addressing to [illegible] lordship, a letter which purposes to ad[illegible] only to the principal objects which we, in [illegible] with those nations, now have in view; but [illegible] the probability which there is of the object [illegible] view being ultimately attained.—I, therefo[illegible] ceed at once to express such ideas as may [illegible] [illegible] to me

My Lord,

As the part about to be acted by your countrymen, in the ſtruggle of humanized nations for every thing ſhort of exiſtence itſelf, will be uſeful and honorable, in a degree that muſt be greater, or ſmaller, in proportion as your official conduct happens to manifeſt more, or leſs, of that good ſenſe, and that becoming dignity, by which it has of late been ſtrongly marked; there muſt be ſome propriety in addreſſing to your lordſhip, a letter which purpoſes to advert—not only to the principal objects which we, in common with thoſe nations, now have in view; but, alſo, to the probability which there is of the objects had in view being ultimately attained.—I, therefore, proceed at once to expreſs ſuch ideas as may readily occur to me.

The preſent juncture is the criſis of the affairs of European governments. But the rules which guide the government of any country, compoſe the chief part of its conſtitution. The preſent juncture, therefore, may not improperly be conſidered as the criſis of the affairs of European conſtitutions. But, upon the excellence, or the defects, of the conſtitution of a country, depends its good, or its ill ſucceſs: and hence, the preſent juncture may be conſidered as being likewiſe the criſis of the affairs of European nations.—To every people on earth ſuch a criſis muſt be intereſting: but to none can it be more intereſting than to the Britiſh—none having ſo much to loſe, in the caſe of Fortune frowning upon them; or ſo little to gain, in the caſe of her continuing to favour them with her ſmiles.

What is the ſtate of the Britiſh nation at this criſis? How came it to be what it is? What would the reverſe of that ſtate be? How may ſuch a reverſe be occaſioned?

Theſe queries, my Lord, are not of trivial import. They cannot be ſo, at a period in which we are called upon frequently and loudly, to take ſteps that would undoubtedly lead to a total change of our condition as a people. It may be, indeed, that thoſe who thus call upon us, are not diſintereſted,

intereſted, zealous friends—ſolicitous about our national proſperity and glory: on the contrary, it may be, that they are intereſted perſons—ſome of whom are only lukewarm friends, others not much better than mortal enemies—while all of them concern themſelves more about advancing their own fortunes, than about promoting our intereſts; more about the fulfilment of their predictions relative to a neighbouring democracy, which counſels, ſuch as they give, are driving faſt to perdition, than about heightening the enjoyments experienced under our monarchy, which flouriſhes inceſſantly, becauſe we at once diſdain their counſels, and reject their perſons. But, of whichever of theſe deſcriptions thoſe men be, who call upon us in ſuch a manner, and for ſuch a purpoſe, the above queries are not of trivial import. For, ſuppoſe them friends, then a diſcuſſion of ſuch queries may enable us to convince them, that their proffers of friendſhip manifeſt more of zeal than of knowledge, and, therefore, ought to be declined: or, ſuppoſe them enemies, then the diſcuſſion may enable us to ſhew them to be ſuch, and to tear the ſheeps cloathing off their ſhoulders—ſo as to expoſe them to the public in much of their genuine turpitude.

Having taken up my pen—by no means with a deſign of entering into a formal, and full diſcuſſion

of the propoſed queries, I can have no hopes either of completely convincing the amicable of their weakneſs; or, of completely expoſing the inimical on account of their wickedneſs. All that I venture to hope is, that, while I am expreſſing my ideas (in doing which I ſhall avail myſelf of that latitude of arrangement, and perhaps too of that familiarity of expreſſion, which epiſtolary writing warrants) I ſhall hit upon ſome things that may have a tendency to convince the one, and expoſe the other; and, upon the whole, to add a little to the ſtability of our Glorious Conſtitution in Church and State. "Could I but "ſucceed ſo as to afford new reaſons to every man "to love his duty, his prince, his country, his "laws; new reaſons to render him more ſenſible "of the bleſſings he enjoys, I ſhould think myſelf "the happieſt of mortals."

What is the ſtate of the nation at this criſis?—I ſhall, agreeably to what I have hinted, forbear to enter formally, and fully, into a diſcuſſion of this topic. There are two reaſons for my doing ſo. The one is, a perſuaſion that no Britiſh ſubject of any conſideration, can be ingnorant, that the ſtate of the nation is highly proſperous: The other is, the circumſtance of my foreſeeing plainly, that, in my progreſs through theſe ſheets, I ſhall again, and again, have occaſion to treat of both the abſo-

lute,

lute, and the relative ſtate of the nation.—For the preſent, I ſhall content myſelf with expreſſing a very few ideas, in very general terms.

The faculties, and the reſources of the Britiſh nation, at this time, are numerous, and valuable; and, both in number and in value, they ſeem to increaſe conſtantly.——The great fertility of our ſoil, may be inferred from the abundance of cattle, and of grain, with which our markets are ſupplied; and, perhaps, from the difficulties which the executive power experiences in preventing the exportation of large quantities of the latter commodity.——The high price of land is very ſenſibly felt by every purchaſer.——The improvements recently made by our artiſts are acknowledged both here, and in foreign countries.——The ſucceſs of our manufacturers appears from the enlargement, and the opulence of our principal manufacturing towns.——The extenſion of navigation, and the advancement of commerce, are evident from the additions made, almoſt daily, to the Cuſtom Houſe entries of ſhips, and of merchandize.——The proſperous condition of the public finances, is obvious from the extraordinary amount of the ſurplus of the revenue; which His Majeſty ſtated, in the laſt ſpeech delivered from the throne, to be ſuch as to afford ſufficient ground for hoping, that the expences of the armament,

then going on, might be defrayed out of it, without any neceſſity being felt for impoſing freſh taxes. The difference between *an armament*, and *a war*, ought here to be marked. Nor ought this circumſtance to be overlooked, that, although miniſters, in debating upon the King's ſpeech, laid much ſtreſs on the expectations formed from the exceſs of the revenue over the expenditure, yet, not a ſingle objection was urged by oppoſition, againſt either what the ſpeech contained on that head, or the comments of miniſters upon its contents.——As to public credit, which, except upon the eve of a war, or at a juncture aſſumed as the eve of a war, always bears a direct proportion to the exceſs of the revenue over the expenditure, it is now much higher than any one unacquainted with it would conclude it to be, were he to draw his concluſion from a view of the various connections of Great Britain with other countries.—— And, with regard to our glorious Conſtitution—the prime of all the objects that claim our attention—it appears, that the meaſures lately purſued, firſt by the King and his miniſters, next by the two houſes of parliament, and then by the great body of the people themſelves, have completely removed every ſpecies of danger with which it was threatened. —On looking at the Church, we ſee projects which the nonconformiſts hoped to be able to accompliſh, through the repeal of the corporation

and

and teſt acts, rendered abortive for a period equal to the ordinary life of man. We ſee Atheiſm, the twin-ſiſter of Anarchy, almoſt every where diſcountenanced. We alſo ſee the bold apoſtle of Socinianiſm, after being perſecuted with fire and Birmingham poniards, for righteouſneſs and republicaniſm's ſake, forced to ſit down in ſadneſs, amid his new aſſortment of crucibles, retorts and receivers; yet, perhaps, not altogether wretched, having it in his power to recollect, that he had been admitted to the high honors of French citizenſhip, and of French fraternity.——When we turn our eyes to the State, we behold its foreign enemies ſet at defiance; its domeſtic enemies diſarmed, exiled, or executed; and its domeſtic friends — THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE — whoſe efforts are ten thouſand times more to be dreaded, at this criſis, than thoſe of all manner of foes of all manner of deſcriptions, condemned to a mortifying ſilence, by the award of every other man in the kingdom;—ſave only when they ſeek to preſerve themſelves from eternal infamy, by endeavouring to juſtify their very unjuſtifiable conduct. We behold, in whatever point of view we contemplate the conſtitution, ſome out of her little clubs of oppoſers, laid proſtrate at her feet; and many from among her vaſt aſſociations of ſupporters, ſtanding erect, and firm by her ſide. We behold, in fine, LEGAL LIBERTY — the grand

ſweetener of human life—the ineſtimable birth-right of ourſelves, and of our forefathers, well ſecured to us, and likely to be the precious inheritance of our children, and of their deſcendants to the lateſt poſterity.——To ſpeak more generally of the preſent ſtate of the nation, it is ſuch as qualifies us alike for the enjoyment of peace, and for the proſecution of war;—for taſting the cup of pleaſure under the olive's quiet ſhade, and for executing plans calculated to exhibit the Britiſh victor crowned with wreaths of the laurel. It is a ſtate in which little is to be feared, except that inſolence which is wont to graft itſelf upon national proſperity; and to contribute, as it was ſuppoſed to do during the American rebellion, to national adverſity.

How came the ſtate of the nation to be what it is?——It came to be what it is, through means ſimilar to thoſe through which the ſtate of other nations had become highly proſperous. It came to be what it is, in the firſt place, through the inſtitution, at divers times, of laws ſuited to the genius of the people, and their progreſs in civilization—of laws intended to challenge regard by being moderate, not by being violent; by owing their materials to antiquity, not by exhibiting an uſeleſs novelty; by promoting the permanent intereſts of the multitude, not by gratifying their ever-

ever-varying caprices: in the next place, through the adoption of a ſeries of public meaſures, congenial to the ſpirit of ſubſiſting laws, and fitted to confer upon the community real greatneſs and glory.

The Roman people (as the father of modern juriſprudence has obſerved) roſe into eminence through their reverence for the eſtabliſhed religion of their country; through their paſſion for fame; through their ſkill in the military art; through their contempt of riches; and, finally, through their ardent love for their liberty, and their laws.—The Engliſh have riſen to diſtinction, through their attention to agriculture, to manufactures, and to commerce; through their martial proweſs—eſpecially ſuch as is of the naval kind; through their ſteady regard to the importance of maintaining good faith, and an honorable name among nations; through their predilection for an epiſcopal eſtabliſhment of religion; and through their zeal in ſecuring thoſe choice bleſſings of freedom which flow ſo naturally, and ſo copiouſly, from their matchleſs conſtitution of King, Lords, and Commons.

I muſt, in paſſing, obſerve, that, of the above cauſes of our elevation, thoſe which have a reference to our conſtitution in church and ſtate; and

and to our national faith and character; are the moſt conſiderable. I muſt alſo obſerve, that I think rather ill of thoſe perſons, who have ſpoken of inverting not merely the order of names, but even that of things (of things too the moſt eſſential to our well-being, both temporal and eternal) by giving us Commons, Lords, and a King—inſtead of a King, Lords, and Commons. I think ill of them, becauſe it is probable, that ſuch an order of things as they would beſtow on us, could not endure long; and becauſe it is more than probable, that they really are not deſirous that it ſhould endure long—but rather that it ſhould, in their good time, be made to give way to one more ſimple—to one ſuch as that now to be ſeen in France.——I muſt farther obſerve, that I cannot but think ill of thoſe who have inſinuated, that our engagements with the Dutch, though chearfully ſanctioned by parliament, and heartily approved by every man of common ſenſe in the united kingdoms, ought not to be punctually kept; and who have recommended to the Britiſh nation to degrade themſelves, by appearing, as ſuppliants, at the bar of an aſſemblage of men, from the tenour of whoſe conduct nothing can reaſonably be looked for, except inſult, or injury.——Spain has recently acted as if Mr. Fox had been His Catholic Majeſty's chief counſellor. Mr. Fox, however, will not allege, that the conduct of that country has

redounded

redounded much to its honor. Perhaps he really does not wiſh his country to abaſe herſelf, as Spain has done. It may be, that he only longs to have it in his power, after the commencement of war, to remind miniſtry, that he propoſed a meaſure, by the adoption of which the loſs in men, and money, neceſſarily attendant upon a war, might have been avoided; to reproach them for having rejected his propoſal; and to take credit to himſelf for having made it. But, the indignation with which his propoſal has been received both by parliament, and the public, has completely cut him off from this reſource.

The Romans at length fell: for they neglected the virtues through which they had attained to grandeur. The Britiſh too will one day fall. They will fall, whenever they loſe ſight of the ſteps by which they aſcended to their preſent eminent ſtation in the world. Happily, however, there are no preſent appearances of their loſing ſight of thoſe ſteps. On the contrary, they have in the affection, and love of his Majeſty for his ſubjects; in the wiſdom, and vigour of miniſtry; and in the virtue, and true patriotiſm of the two houſes of parliament; an earneſt, and a pledge of the laſting enjoyment of every reaſonable meaſure of whatever can render the empire powerful, ſplendid, or happy.

What

What would the reverſe of the ſtate of this nation be?——It would be the ſame as the actual ſtate of that perfidious, bloodthirſty nation, whom many of us know by the appellation of natural enemies—all of us by that of ancient, envious, perſevering rivals. When I allude to what their preſent ſtate is, I allude, as one who knows the truth may be expected to do, to almoſt every thing degrading to the ſpecies; almoſt every thing ſhocking to humanity; almoſt every thing ſubverſive of the order, the peace, the proſperity, and the enjoyments of ſocial beings.——"Better reign in hell "than ſerve in heaven." I have been at little pains to learn, whether thoſe who now reign in France, have, by any of their decrees, tried to give currency to this diabolical maxim. Taken literally, it is, as it was intended to be, extremely falſe: but this is by no means a reaſon for its being rejected by the new ſovereigns of France. Grant, for a moment, that that country is hell: and then compare the importance, and the felicity of reigning there, with thoſe of ſerving—I do not ſay in heaven, nor yet in any country which, from being more favored by providence than moſt others, may be aſſumed as an heaven—I only ſay in Turkey; and ſtill the maxim will be very falſe. For it is abſolutely true, that the Ottoman ſlave, whom conflagrations terrify; whom the plague conſumes; and whom the iron hand of the Sultan often oppreſſes; is yet infinitely more ſecure of his

his property, his character, his liberty, and his life, than the moſt powerful of all the French demagogues. Better ſerve in Turkey than rule in France.

How may the preſent ſtate of the nation be reverſed?——It may be reverſed, in general, by neglecting the means through which it became proſperous; in particular, by adopting thoſe principles of legiſlating, and of governing, which have ſo quickly reverſed the flouriſhing condition of the French.

The ſtate of the Britiſh nation will be reverſed—the proſperity of the Britiſh empire will be diminiſhed; her honor will be tarniſhed; and her fair fame, now in all appearance fitted for immortality, will be deſtroyed; the very day on which her inhabitants, captivated more with names, than with realities; and enamoured more of the ſhadow, than of the ſubſtance; ſhall be proud of calling themſelves citizens, not ſubjects; and ſhall boaſt of every man's liberty to do what he pleaſes, rather than of his obligation to do only what is right. The Britiſh empire will decline, and verge towards ruin, whenever ſhe ſhall be rendered obnoxious to the indeſcribable miſeries of a Revolution in her civil, and eccleſiaſtical governments; or, in either the one, or the other. She will become wretched, and be prepared for her fall, whenever any numerous ſociety of innovators ſhall ſucceed in thoroughly

thoroughly diſtracting the minds of their fellow ſubjects; and in drawing them into an inteſtine ſtruggle marked with uproar, and diſmay;—into ſuch a ſtruggle as muſt leave them to contemplate a poſture of things characterized by nought ſave a contempt of that true wiſdom which the experience of graver ages has beſtowed; and the prevalence of folly ſprung from uſeleſs conceit, and dangerous novelty.——It is in a condition like this, that popular phrenzy, breaking through every reſtraint, ſcorns to ſpare, for a moment, any thing, however decorous, venerable, or ſacred. It is then, that the hand of the barbarian is laid on the beautiful monuments of art; that the baſe born efface the records of illuſtrious anceſtry; that fire conſumes the coſtly productions of philoſophers, legiſlators, and ſtateſmen; that the violence of the factious ſubverts the throne of the prince; and that the preſumption of the impious profanes the altar of the Deity: it is then, in a word, that the fury of the miſguided multitude, ſweeping away, at one inconſiderate ſtroke, the accumulated wealth, wiſdom, and glory of ages, leaves a man a wretched ſavage in the midſt of a wilderneſs of his own creating *.

* I have, for a conſiderable time, attended ſtrictly to the effects of the French Revolution, upon *the fine arts, philoſophy*, and *the Chriſtian religion*; and I mean, at a convenient ſeaſon, to preſent my thoughts upon the ſubject to the public.

The

The ſtate of things at Athens ſometimes reſembled this, in conſequence of the intrigues of the oratorical demagogues, both with their fellow citizens, and with foreign powers. The ſtate of things at Rome likewiſe reſembled this, on more occaſions than one, in conſequence of the ſeditious conduct of the tribunes of the people. To the efforts of the tribunes, indeed, may juſtly be imputed the ruin of the republick; as it was through them that the eſtabliſhment of arbitrary power was rendered neceſſary.

In what other ill-fated country, has the ſtate of things been ſuch as that deſcribed? It has been ſuch in France: it is ſuch there at this moment. Nor is this all that concerns us. The ſtate of things will be as deplorable here, and in every civilized country in Europe, as it now is in France—whenever the inhabitants of ſuch countries ſhall ceaſe to deſpiſe what the French deem wiſdom; and to abominate what they term virtue. If unfortunately they act thus, ſomewhat more than ſuch a poſture of affairs will be witneſſed. The horrors of another long night of intellectual darkneſs, will come upon mankind.

We have to hope for better things. For it would be very ſtrange, if the ſtriking example of two ancient nations, and the ſtill more ſtriking one

of a modern and adjoining nation, did not inſpire us with ſuch a deteſtation of democratical projects, as to preſerve us from the calamities with which they are fraught. But hiſtory holds up to our view, an example much better fitted than any of theſe, to fill us with deteſtation of all ſuch projects—the example of Engliſhmen under the arch democrat Cromwell. How did all orders of men fare under his righteous government?

I need not deſcribe how they fared. For, as my fellow ſubjects have lately entered ſo deeply into the ſtudy of the hiſtory, and the politics of foreign countries; they cannot have overlooked the more important paſſages of the hiſtory, and the politics of their own.——They cannot have failed to remark that, under Cromwell were to be ſeen the ancient government of England in ruins; her eſtabliſhed church trodden under foot; and her auguſt Sovereign "fallen from his high eſtate, and "weltering in his blood." They muſt have remarked that, under him, as under the preſent uſurpers of France, foreign war was indiſpenſably requiſite to the prevention of domeſtic war; that neither property, nor liberty, nor life itſelf, was duly protected—nay—that the firſt of theſe was continually expoſed to depredation; while the other two were ſo inſecure, that fear was viſible in every countenance, and pervaded every breaſt to

ſuch

ſuch a degree—that even the guilty heart of the Protector himſelf, told him, that, unleſs caſed with ſteel, it could not be ſafe.

As it was then with England, ſo it is now with France—the lot of which we are called upon to admire! the example of which we are requeſted to imitate! Both countries, it is obſervable, have been indebted for their calamities to the ſame cauſe—to *republicaniſm*. The conſideration of this ſhould, I think, as has already been hinted, fill Britons with not a little diſlike of that ſort of government; eſpecially when the principal ingredient in the compoſition of the ſyſtem happens to be *democracy*. Nay, ſuch a conſideration ought to operate in the ſame manner on the minds of Frenchmen; and, doubtleſs, it has long ſince done ſo, on thoſe of ſuch of them as are endued with a competent ſhare of moderation and knowledge. The conſequences to be expected from ſuch an operation on the minds of both nations are theſe—that the French haſten to aboliſh their ruinous ſyſtem—unleſs they foreſee its end in its many inherent vices; and, that the Britiſh peremptorily refuſe their countenance to any ſimilar one—not ſolely, however, on account of its original defects; nor yet becauſe our choice of it would be that of a greater evil than any we are now ſuppoſed to ſuffer: but, becauſe obſervation and experiment

have demonſtrated the French ſyſtem to be an intolerable curſe; while they have demonſtrated ours to be an enviable bleſſing. The poet's maxim, "Better keep the ills we have, than flee to others "which we know not of," is not neceſſary to the arguments of thoſe who think that we ought not to make a ſacrifice of our well-tried, much-approved, glorious conſtitution; for the ſake of ſubſtituting in its room, the upſtart, trifling, diſgraceful one of the French.

Are the French, or even the Britiſh, ſo circumſtanced as to render a republican form of government eligible?

Republican government, if it be democratical, cannot ſubſiſt among a people who are contemners of religion; who have bad morals; or who live luxuriouſly.——It cannot ſubſiſt with irreligion, becauſe irreligion is the foundation of immorality: it cannot ſubſiſt with immorality, becauſe immorality is the baſis of luxury: it cannot ſubſiſt with luxury, becauſe the means that muſt be uſed for the ſupport of luxury, extinguiſh in mens breaſts the love of their country, without which no democracy can long endure. "In proportion as "luxury gains ground in a republic, the minds of "the people are turned towards their particular "intereſt. Thoſe who are allowed only what is "neceſſary,

" neceſſary, have nothing to wiſh for but their own
" and their country's glory. But a ſoul depraved
" by luxury has many other deſires, and ſoon
" becomes an enemy to the laws that confine it.
" The luxury in which the garriſon of Rhegio
" began to live was the cauſe of their maſſacre-
" ing the inhabitants."

At the preſent moment, the French are more irreligious, more immoral, and by no means leſs luxurious, than they ever were under their ancient regal government. Hence it appears, that they are unfit for being republicans of any deſcription—but eſpecially for being *democrats*.

A republic, then, is an improper ſpecies of government for the French. It muſt continue to be ſo, becauſe the defects of that people in regard to luxury, to morals, and to religion, have become not only exceſſive, but alſo habitual. Add to theſe things, that the ſtage of ſociety which they have reached is much againſt them. They live, although they proceed as if they were ignorant of the fact, not in the days of Romulus, but in thoſe of Cato; not in that innocent, infant ſeaſon, when virtue ſprings up ſpontaneouſly; but, in that vitiated, advanced ſeaſon, when it appears not at all, except through means of a forced cultivation.

At ſuch a time, it ſurely becomes the French to proceed with caution; and on no account to omit profiting of the bequeſts of departed genius. But their philoſophy has deprived them of all caution; and, in regard to the grand concerns of their country, almoſt of reaſon itſelf. Inſtead of teaching them to know themſelves—inſtead of bringing them to that point at which one proves his attainments to be great, by making it appear that he is enſible of their defects, it has induced them to fancy themſelves "wiſe as gods." No wonder they had taſted freely of the fruit of the *tree of liberty*, which is ſcarcely leſs pernicious than that of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.—They are faithful, throughout, to the antediluvian example which they copy. Ruined themſelves, they ſpare no pains to effect the ruin of others: And their earneſt interrogatory to all nations is, "Yea, and hath nature and reaſon, God and man, "indeed ſaid, Ye may not ſafely eat the fruit of "this ſame tree?" But, in ſpite of all their hardihood, it is evident, that they have already begun to be aſhamed of their nakedneſs; and to dread that awful voice which doubtleſs will be heard in the garden, at the cool of the day.

Ignorant of their own condition as a people; and heedleſs both of grave precepts, and of admired examples; they have endeavoured to give

to their countrymen—not the beſt practical ſyſtem, but the beſt imaginary one. Yet, it may be, that the impropriety of their conduct, in this reſpect, will admit of ſome palliation. Perhaps they have flattered themſelves, that, as the virtue of the people is that which renders a democracy proſperous; ſo, a democracy muſt neceſſarily inſpire a people with virtue. Nothing but one's ſuppoſing, that they have thus abſurdly flattered themſelves, can enable him to account for that perilous exceſs of deviation which they have made, in the face of experience itſelf, from all the principles, and practices of their ancient, and *very improvable* conſtitution.

It is unneceſſary to take the trouble of ſhewing, in what a ſtate religion has long been, and now is, in France. None who reads, and few who hear, can be unacquained with its deplorable condition. All muſt, I think, have underſtood, that, to the unlearned in France, true religion has always been imperfectly known; and that, to the learned there, it has been known only that it might be derided. Perſons of this laſt deſcription, have lately decided upon the nature, and the utility of divine worſhip: and, that their religious ſyſtem may, in all reſpects, be a-kin to their civil one, they have diſcarded their Deiſtical doctrines, and preſcribed Atheiſm as

the infallible means of inſuring mundane bliſs. Celeſtial bliſs is no longer an object in regenerated France. Fortunate country!

The introduction of Atheiſm into a country containing twenty-four millions of inhabitants, was no inconſiderable enterprize. Nor have the effects of the enterprize been inconſiderable. They have long ſince manifeſted themſelves in the total diſregard of the ſacredneſs, and obligatory nature of oaths. The Atheiſt, whoſe metaphyſics have deprived conſcience of its monitory powers, will not, of courſe, deem himſelf criminal when he is guilty of perjury; nor will he have his mind ſubjected to uneaſineſs through meditation upon a day of retribution. The taking of a falſe oath will appear to him to be always an innocent, often an uſeful act. But, whatever he may do, others will not fail to appreciate his criminality; and to form conjectures about the doom of all thoſe who, by ſtifling the conſciences of multitudes, have prepared them for the tranſgreſſion of every law human and divine.

The according voice of nations, inſpired with real wiſdom—eſpecially that which is from above, has proclaimed the true religion. But, that ſame voice which has led us to the knowledge of

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the religion which is the beſt, has alſo affirmed, that, ſo far as the peace and proſperity of nations is concerned, even the very worſt religion that has ever been received in the world, is preferable to none.

To be without a religion, then, is, it ſeems, to be without that which is a bleſſing to ſociety. The French appear, from any juſt interpretation that can be given of their faith (I ought rather to ſay, their want of faith) to be entirely deſtitute of this bleſſing. They are deſtitute of it, through means of their own deviſing: and their having deviſed, and adopted ſuch means, is the more culpable and inexcuſable, becauſe they ought to have conſidered well, that religion is abſolutely neceſſary to a democracy; and, alſo, becauſe it was within the reach of their power to have ſecured for themſelves not merely that bleſſing, but the very beſt kind of it. Deprived of the advantages which man, in any ſtage of ſociety, may derive from religion, what muſt France ſoon become? Nay, what would England—what would any country on earth forthwith become, if bereft, in ſome moment of divine wrath, at once of piety, and of policy—if left, in ſhort, with nothing either to attract the pious eye, or to guide the imperfect judgment?

It is more unneceſſary ſtill, to ſay much by way of evincing the general immorality of the French—their want of chaſtity; their want of truth and honeſty as individuals, and of faith and humanity as a nation. Has it not often been affirmed, that our youth were corrupted, and rendered bad members of ſociety, by reſiding much in their country? Their deficiency, indeed, in regard to morals, has long been almoſt proverbial in theſe kingdoms. It has, for many years, been ſo notorious, that vice has ſeldom prevailed among us, in any uncommon meaſure, without being aſcribed to our intimacy with our more diſſolute neighbours.

With regard to the luxury of the French, it is well known to many in this iſland. It is long ſince Engliſhmen knew it to be general, ſyſtematic, and extremely alluring: And they have, for ages, been accuſtomed to remark of every thing among us unuſually extravagant, frivolous, or effeminate, that it could be nothing elſe than the fruit of our unfortunate intercourſe with that triſling people. The memory of man certainly reaches to no period, in which the French were not the moſt luxurious of all the Chriſtian nations in the world. They were the moſt luxurious of Chriſtian nations, when they began their career of republicaniſm: and, if we attend to thoſe things which are generally conſidered as the principal indications of luxury in any country—

country—namely, a reliſh for ſumptuous entertainments; anxiety about faſhions*; and attachment to theatrical exhibitions; we ſhall be convinced, that, in ſpite of all that hiſtorians and politicians have recorded with regard to the effects of luxury, they are ſo even now.

The Greeks were very fond of theatrical exhibitions. But, although they adopted them for better purpoſes than thoſe which the French have in contemplation, their fondneſs for them ſhewed the decay of their virtue; and the exceſs of their fondneſs proved one of the principal cauſes of the ruin of their republic.——The Romans, too, had ſplendid theatrical exhibitions; which, like thoſe of the Greeks, were adopted with a view to the improvement of manners. But they, at length, degenerated into ſcenes of viciouſneſs, and brutality; and became inſtrumental to the extinction of liberty.

The luxury of the French republicans, conſidered upon the whole, is ſuch as they cannot

* I except the dreſs of the legiſlators of France—who, being ſavages internally, muſt, for conſiſtency's ſake, be Syberians externally. I allude to the dreſs of thoſe who, having little to do with the ſtate, find leiſure to attend to their perſons; which they do in ſuch a way as to draw to their capital, from other countries, milleners, haberdaſhers, and tayolrs, in as great numbers as ever.

poſſibly

poſſibly deſtroy: and if they do not deſtroy it, it will infallibly deſtroy them—I mean as *republicans*. Before they can deſtroy it, nature muſt give them other qualities, other ſentiments, other ſenſes. She muſt take from their women their varied powers of attracting, and miſleading: and ſhe muſt beſtow on their men gravity, ſteadineſs, perſeverance. She muſt do more—ſhe muſt addict both men and women, not to rich ſauces ſuch as thoſe which coſt the Athenians ſo dear; but to black broth ſuch as that which indicated the virtue of the Lacedemonians. *Soupe maigre*, I may be told, is no bad ſubſtitute for the black broth.

If the French deſtroy their luxury, they muſt, of courſe, effectually cut themſelves off from thoſe means of acquiring wealth, to the diſcovery of which their ſtateſmen have, for many ages, directed all the energies of their minds.—They muſt do a more difficult thing ſtill: they muſt root out of their hearts the love of gain; that is, they muſt break the main ſpring of agriculture, of manufactures, of the arts, of commerce, and of navigation—in other words, they muſt abandon all the principal ſources of national wealth, power, and grandeur. They muſt of neceſſity do theſe things; and then they muſt, no doubt, crown the work by inſtituting gymnaſtic exerciſes, and gladiatorial exhibitions,

hibitions. The conquerors of the Baſtille, and the Marſeillois, will be found worthy of the higheſt honors that can be gained in the new ſchools.

Yet, that poverty which is ſo eſſential to the preſervation of the ſubſiſting government of the French, may come to its aid—without their being under the neceſſity of ſeeking after it. The interruption which productive labor now experiences; the very heavy expences of the war in which they are engaged; together with the defection of the moſt valuable of their colonies; may ſpare them the trouble of introducing poverty into their departments, by the virtue of laws.

As poverty, and nothing except poverty, can thoroughly eradicate luxury, the democrats of France ought to hail her approach. It is probable, however, that many of them, after all, will rather feel an averſion to the ghaſtly goddeſs. They may do ſo, becauſe, while ſhe is preſent, each individual muſt content himſelf with what is barely requiſite for the ſupport of nature. Now, to do this, implies the mortification of many deſires which have hitherto been ſtudiouſly gratified: it implies the fall of pride, and the confuſion of vanity, neither of which have been accuſtomed to

controul;

controul: it likewiſe implies the diſcouragement of induſtry, frugality, ingenuity, and enterprize.

The ſtep towards deſtroying luxury, which comes the neareſt to the introduction of poverty, is the eſtabliſhment of an equality of fortunes;—a ſtep, by the way, to which the French have as yet ſhewn little partiality, except in the plunder of the better endowed clergy; and in the confiſcation of the eſtates of the exiled nobles.

An equal diſtribution of fortune, implies an equal allotment of ſpecie, of commercial property, and of land; and, ſome add, of rank.

If the allotment be made of ſpecie, then ends the progreſſive improvement—nay, then begins the progreſſive decay, of agriculture and manufactures: for none but the huſbandman, or manufacturer, who poſſeſſes much ready money, can proceed upon the hopes of a future gain, which is often remote, ſometimes uncertain. But, if he cannot do this, improvement, even of the negative kind, is no more. Nay, agriculture, and manufactures are on the high way to ruin; while merchandize of every denomination, together with the public revenue, and all the important concerns dependant upon the public revenue, are

expoſed

expoſed to utter deſtruction.——Add to theſe conſiderations, that which follows. If no man in a nation be richer than his neighbour, none will be found to encourage enterprize, or to patronize genius: and if ſo, farewell to every art that delights, and humanizes; to every ſcience that inſtructs, and ennobles.

If the allotment be made of commercial property, then the manufactory, which, by the multiplicity of its purſuits, had before excited wonder, muſt exhibit only one cold anvil, or one ill-ſupplied loom. The extenſive warehouſe muſt be contracted into ſomething leſs than a chandler's ſhop: And the eminent merchant, who had been wont to convey property to, and fro, over the whole face of the globe, muſt mount his pack, and commence pedler. Happy for him—if, in times of ſuch unparalleled patriotiſm, his dividend of the national property enable him to move in that humble ſphere.

If the allotment be made of land, why then, we ſhall have the example of certain ancient nations, to produce in juſtification of the meaſure. We ſhall have it in our power to take for the model of our conduct, that of the Romans; who were, as the French and we are, the inhabitants of a vaſt territory. On doing ſo, however, it will become us to re-

remember, that, although the Romans equalized their lands, and thereby contributed ſomething towards the aggrandizement of the ſtate; yet, when they did ſo, they were in an early, ſimple, uncorrupted ſtage of ſociety; which the French and we are not. They never were ſo unjuſt, and ſo cruel, as to break the hearts of the immemorial poſſeſſors of fair inheritances, by robbing them of their lands—in order to give them to culprits enlarged from the gallies, or the jail. Baſe, low-minded Romans! How unlike your procedure, to the ſublime flights of the French! But I muſt not vilify the dead. The Romans, though hitherto celebrated in all countries, and ages, for the excellence of their juriſprudence, were not bleſſed with the *Rights of Man*.——Upon this topic I ſhall juſt add, that an equal diviſion of land cannot be carried into effect; and that, if it could, and were carried into effect, it would prove ruinous to every claſs of men; but, eſpecially to the poor—to whom levellers conſtantly hold out their lures about agrarian laws, and equal allotments of property *.

If ranks were to be equalized (or deſtroyed) miſchiefs would be felt ſimilar to ſome of thoſe that would reſult from equally dividing ſpecie, and

* Dr. Vincent has publiſhed an excellent diſcourſe, on this ſubject.

land.

land. For thoſe who are now the moſt diſtinguiſh-able by their rank, are the nobility. And as it is by them, principally, that both the mechanical, and the fine arts—as alſo great undertakings for the public benefit (ſuch as canals)—are encouraged and patronized; it cannot be neceſſary to point out the fatal effects that would follow from disfranchiſing them. Beſides, it is by the nobility that moderate luxury, ſo requiſite to the being of a civil conſtitution like ours, is fed and ſupported: and if we take away that food, and that ſupport, the conſequences to the induſtrious, the ingenious, and the perſevering, through all the lower, and middle claſſes of ſociety, muſt be obvious. They will be found to be nothing leſs than penury, beggary, or downright ſtarving.——But, privileged orders are not neceſſary to a democracy. True. They are even dangerous to ſuch a government. Regular employment, however, and daily bread, are neceſſary under any form of government: and as, in order to maintain pure democracy, you muſt deſtroy that upon which much of the regular employment, and daily bread, of the far greater part of a community depend; very little, one would think, needs be ſaid in order to diſſuade men of common ſenſe, from abetting the projects of thoſe who wiſh to pave the way to democracy, by caſting an odium on the privileges of the nobility. There may, I confeſs, be ſomething pleaſant in

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having it ſaid, that, at length, we are all upon a footing in regard to rank. Yet, I am apt to doubt, whether any one who muſt live by the labor of his head, or of his hands, would feel much pleaſed, were he to be beſet by want, and its attendant train of miſeries.

An order of nobility, it then appears, ought to be preſerved in this country, on account of the evils that would reſult to the common people from deſtroying it. But it might eaſily be proved, that it ought to be preſerved on other accounts—on account of the nobility forming an eſtate in the conſtitution of their country; and, on account of the many endearing qualities which an impartial eye diſcerns in perſons of illuſtrious birth. In private, and in public; in the cabinet, and in the field; on the bench, and in the pulpit; Britons of noble extraction are known to merit the higheſt praiſes of their countrymen.

In attending to theſe projects of equalization, one never loſes ſight of a certain principle—if it be right to call that a principle which is the reverſe of another principle. The principle I allude to, is *injuſtice*. Nothing ſurely can be more groſsly unjuſt, than to take from a fellow ſubject, or fellow citizen (no matter which) property of any kind, which he, or any one of his anceſtors, had

acquired by ſkill, and perſonal exertions; or, to ſtrip him of honors that had been the reward of eloquence, of heroiſm, or of public ſervices. Nay, the injuſtice of doing ſuch things is ſo glaring, that, in order to its being execrated, it is merely neceſſary that it be mentioned. The probity of Engliſhmen ſurely never will allow them to copy the example of thoſe, who ſupport the adminiſtration of their affairs by fraud, and confiſcation; and their armies by extortion, and plunder.

With reſpect to theſe particulars, the French far exceed any thing that is recorded of the Spartans. The latter uſed to encourage theft at home only. But the former, willing that all mankind ſhould participate of the fruits of their Revolution, patronize the art both at home and abroad. I beg of thoſe who are converſant with continental affairs, to tell the world (your lordſhip could do it well) whether the following obſervation of Monteſquieu's, on the character of the Romans, be not applicable enough to the French?—"Being "maſters of a great part of the univerſe, they "arrogated to themſelves the treaſures of the "whole; and were leſs unjuſt robbers, conſidered "as conquerors, than conſidered as legiſlators."—Monteſquieu adds, "Hearing that Ptolemy, king "of Cyprus, was poſſeſſed of immenſe wealth, "they enacted a law, propoſed by a tribune, by

 "which

" which they gave to themſelves the inheritance " of a man ſtill living, and confiſcated to their " own uſe, the eſtates of a confederate prince."

A republican government has been ſaid to be unfit for the French: and arguments to prove it ſo, have been deduced from their modes of thinking, and of acting. But, arguments calculated to prove it unfit for them, may alſo be deduced from the extent, and the poſition of their territories. So that we may aſſert, not only that republican government is unfit for the French; but, alſo, that it is unfit for France.

Theſe two poſitions, which, when conſidered in moſt points of view, would lead to the ſame concluſion, are true ones: A democratical republic is not proper for an extenſive territory; and an extenſive territory is improper for a democratical republic—indeed for any republic.

A democracy can no more ſubſiſt in a very extenſive territory, than unlimited monarchy, (i. e. deſpotiſm) can in a very ſmall one. The inhabitants of a country of the latter deſcription would periſh, by the rod of iron falling too often upon them. In like manner, the inhabitants of a country of the former deſcription would be ruined, through means of the diſtance of their

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central government, and of the laxity of their own conſequent upon that diſtance. This laxity would operate in one, or the other, of theſe two ways. It would either admit of great military, or civil officers, acquiring wealth, and power, in ſuch a meaſure as to tempt them to propagate ſeditious principles, and to endanger the ſtate by their pretenſions to ſovereignty: or, it would furniſh the inhabitants of the extreme parts of the republic, with many opportunities to form, and execute ſchemes of revolt, and independence.

But are not ſuch miſchiefs ſuſceptible of a remedy? Thoſe of the firſt ſort always are: Thoſe of the latter ſort, only in one caſe.

Thoſe of the firſt ſort may be remedied, by uſing the means which have commonly been preſcribed, as well in deſpotic monarchies, as in pure democracies; namely, proſcriptions, impriſonments, and capital puniſhments. The republic of Athens, and the empires of Perſia, and of Rome, adopted theſe radical remedies in former times. The republic of France, and the empires of Turkey, and of Ruſſia, do the ſame now. Of theſe modern nations, candid hiſtorians will have to record, that, if fear of tyranny, and the jealouſy of love, often ſtained with blood the portals of the Seraglio; ambition, and the jealouſy of power, likewiſe ex-

hibited their victims in the avenues leading to the French National Convention: And, of thoſe ancient nations, juſt as of theſe modern ones, they muſt relate, that, under them, property was the ſignal for attack; bright genius a dangerous talent; and military fame the ſource of obloquy, and the forerunner of ignominious death.——How nearly do the extremes of governments approach in their principal effects! He is no ſhallow reaſoner, who can clear up the doubts that ariſe in the mind of a politician of much obſervation and reflection, when he inquires, Whether the abſolute power of one bad man, or that of a convention of democrats, be the more execrable and pernicious? in other words, whether one ſupreme monſter, or many monſters contending for ſupremacy, be the more intolerable to man—the more at enmity with God. Mr. Hume has done ſo to a certain degree. "As one kind of death may be preferable "to another, it may be enquired, whether it "be more deſirable for the Britiſh conſtitution to "terminate in a popular government, or in abſo-"lute monarchy? Here I would frankly declare, "that, though liberty be preferable to ſlavery, in "almoſt every caſe, yet I ſhould rather wiſh to "ſee an abſolute monarch, than a republic in this "iſland. For, let us conſider what kind of re-"public we have reaſon to expect. The queſtion "is, not concerning any fine imaginary republic,

"of which a man may form a plan in his cloſet.
"There is no doubt, but a popular government
"may be imagined more perfect than an abſolute
"monarchy, or even than our preſent conſtitution.
"But what reaſon have we to expect that any ſuch
"government will ever be eſtabliſhed in Great-
"Britain, upon the diſſolution of our monarchy?
"If any ſingle perſon acquire power enough to
"take our conſtitution to pieces, and put it up
"anew, he is really an abſolute monarch; and we
"have already had an inſtance of this kind ſuf-
"ficient to convince us, that ſuch a perſon will
"never reſign his power, or eſtabliſh any free
"government. Matters, therefore, muſt be truſted
"to their natural progreſs and operation; and the
"Houſe of Commons, according to its preſent
"conſtitution, muſt be the only legiſlature in ſuch
"a popular government. The inconveniencies
"attending ſuch a ſituation of affairs, preſent
"themſelves by thouſands. If the Houſe of
"Commons in ſuch a caſe, ever diſſolve itſelf,
"which is not to be expected, we may look
"for a civil war every election. If it continue
"itſelf, we ſhall ſuffer all the tyranny of a faction,
"ſubdivided into new factions. And as ſuch a
"violent government cannot long ſubſiſt, we ſhall,
"at laſt, after many convulſions, and civil wars,
"find repoſe in abſolute monarchy; which it would
"have been happier for us to have eſtabliſhed

"peaceably from the beginning. Abſolute mo-
"narchy, therefore, is the eaſieſt death, the true
"*euthanaſia* of the Britiſh conſtitution.

"Thus, if we have reaſon to be more jealous of
"monarchy, becauſe the danger is more immi-
"nent from that quarter; we have alſo reaſon to
"be more jealous of popular government, becauſe
"that danger is more terrible. This may teach
"us a leſſon of moderation in all our political
"controverſies."

Miſchiefs of the other deſcription can be reme-died, only when the extreme parts of a republic are not ſeparated from the body of it, by oceans, or very extenſive ſeas. When they happen to be ſo ſeparated, no remedy is to be found.

I ſhall not enquire whether the preſent rebellion in the French Weſt India iſlands, has been oc-caſioned by their diſtance ſolely; or, by their diſtance, in conjunction with an exceſs of freedom. I ſhall only obſerve, that, although the Britiſh empire has not, for more than a century, been governed by democratical laws; yet, her laws have partaken too much of freedom for her to preſerve the allegiance of all her colonies. In ſhort, remote and ſeparate dependencies, are re-tainable by no human means, unleſs ſomewhat re-

reſembling the principle of arbitrary power, be permitted to enter into the government of them. They certainly are not retainable by a democracy; and if they were, the retention of them, for reaſons already aſſigned, would not be deſirable. I ſpeak the language of ſoberneſs and truth, when I affirm, that if the French really do deem a democracy the beſt form of government, nothing ought to be ſo ardently deſired by them, as the defalcation of all their foreign poſſeſſions.—A war with the Engliſh, and the Dutch, may render them this ſervice, whether they deſire it, or not.

Nothing but monarchy, wiſely limited monarchy, is fit for any European country, in theſe times, if, like France, or Great-Britain, it be extenſive, and highly poliſhed. The inhabitants of ſuch a country would not much reliſh the occupations of hunters, or of fiſhermen. They would be but little gratified by being aſſured of the neceſſity of their taking up their abode in woods, or in hollow rocks. Civilization is not acquired without much expence; and it ought not to be expected of any people, that they ſhould pay a high price for leave to throw away the advantages which it imparts.

It is extremely fortunate for Great-Britain, that the very things that would cauſe the overthrow of

the conſtitution of France, tend directly to the conſervation of hers. Her extenſive poſſeſſions ultimately have this tendency; and ſo have her unequally apportioned riches. "As riches in mo-
" narchies are by their very conſtitution unequally
" divided, there is an abſolute neceſſity for luxury.
" Were the rich not to ſpend their money freely,
" the poor would ſtarve. It is even neceſſary here,
" that the expences of the rich ſhould be in pro-
" portion to the inequality of fortunes; and that
" luxury, as we have already obſerved, ſhould in-
" creaſe in this proportion. For the preſervation,
" therefore, of a monarchical ſtate, luxury ought
" continually to increaſe, and to grow more ex-
" tenſive, as it riſes from the laborer to the ar-
" tificers, to the merchants, to the magiſtrates, to
" the nobility, to the great officers of ſtate, up to
" the very prince; otherwiſe the nation will be
" undone.

" In the reign of Auguſtus, a propoſal was made
" in the Roman Senate, which was compoſed
" of grave magiſtrates, learned civilians, and of
" men whoſe heads were filled with the notion of
" the primitive times, to reform the manners and
" luxury of women. It is curious to ſee in Dio,
" with what art this prince eluded the importunate
" ſolicitations of thoſe ſenators. This was becauſe
" he was founding a monarchy, and diſſolving
" a republic."

To

To monarchies, it thus appears, luxury is far from being of a deſtructive nature. Nothing, indeed, can prove deſtructive to them, but that which is the grand and only preſervative of democracies—poverty.

None of our ſenators, I truſt, "having his head "filled with the notions of primitive times," will now diſcover his ignorance of the actual condition, and of the real and permanent intereſts of his country, ſo far as to ſay a ſingle ſyllable in favor of principles excluſively republican. If, at this criſis, he ſpeak at all in favor of republican principles, I hope it will be with the ſole view of recommending that juſt proportion of them, which we ought to mingle with the principles of monarchy.——He will do well, for it will evince his good ſenſe, to ſtrive to perpetuate that mixed ſyſtem, which has, for ages, been the envy of every rational man, of every foreign country; and the delight of all truly patriotic men of this country. He will do the beſt that any Briton can poſſibly do, at the preſent juncture, to compare a ſtate of things marked by national perturbation, degradation, infelicity, and the ſureſt ſymptoms of mutability; with a ſtate marked by national tranquillity, dignity, happineſs, and the moſt unequivocal ſymptoms of permanence; and, to contrive means through which his native iſland may

long

long be preſerved from falling into the one, and ſecured in the fruition of the other.

Through what means, ignorance or wickedneſs excepted, can any Britiſh ſubject be perſuaded, to withhold his reverence, or at leaſt his reſpect, from the conſtitution of England; and to fix it on that of France?

If he attend to theory, he will find that the former diſplays much more, than does the latter, of ſagacity, of ingenuity, of ſymmetry, of ſtrength—more, in ſhort, of whatever can render it uſeful, pleaſing, or durable. He will find that it poſſeſſes enough of theſe rare qualities, to have drawn forth the admiration of the moſt competent judges which theſe latter ages have produced—nay, of almoſt every one of thoſe who have appeared, in an eminent degree, capable of conferring at once proſperity and permanency on ſtates, charms and felicity on ſocial life. He will find that it poſſeſſes much more of ſuch qualities, than would have thrown the moſt celebrated ſages of antiquity into a ſtate of ſcepticiſm. Ariſtotle, Cicero, and Tacitus, were not perſons of ſmall diſcernment, in regard to right, and wrong, in matters of government: Yet, they deſpaired of ſeeing, nay, they declared that human wiſdom could never exhibit for the delight of the world, ſuch a happy mixture of the three

kinds

kinds of power, as we have been accuſtomed to enjoy.

If a Britiſh ſubject turn his attention from theory to practice, he will find the Engliſh conſtitution productive of as much good, and as little ill, as he, if a man of moderation and underſtanding, can expect to be produced by a ſyſtem framed by beings leſs than angels. On the other hand, he will find the French conſtitution productive of leſs good, and of more evil, than he could reaſonably have expected to be produced by a ſyſtem formed, in an enlightened age, by a race of men whom the bulk of mankind, judging even from their actions, have allowed to be conſiderably ſuperior to devils. He will find the one calculated to lend ſuch an effect to negociations, as muſt render a people, in the beſt ſenſe of the word, famous; and, alſo, to promote the acquiſition of property, and to inſure the poſſeſſion of it, ſo as to make it an object of much real value. But, he will find the other calculated to lend to negociations, no other effect than ſuch as muſt ſerve to render a people, in the worſt ſenſe of the term, infamous: he will find it, too, from its very nature, hoſtile to the acquiſition of propery; and to that ſecurity which is known to be indiſpenſably neceſſary to the full enjoyment of it. He will find more than all this—he will find the one yielding

ſpon-

ſpontaneouſly, to all who live under it, things which, of all imaginable human things, are the moſt precious—liberty, and the happineſs that flows from it. But, he will not expect that theſe beſt of all good things, ſhould be yielded by the other, to thoſe who live under it. This fact deſerves to be remarked. Indeed, it is ſo little like any thing which an uninformed man, who is accuſtomed to hear of the ravings of the Jacobins, would expect to obtain, that I will again expreſs it: A Britiſh ſubject, if a man of moderation and underſtanding, will not expect that LIBERTY, and the happineſs that flows from it, ſhould reſult to the French from their preſent conſtitution. He will be far from expecting ſo vain a thing, becauſe he will be aware, that liberty is not neceſſarily connected with republican government; becauſe he will be aware, that the republic of the French is, unhappily for them, a democracy—a democracy, too, founded in extreme equality, and extreme liberty—at the ſame time that, "Heaven is not more diſtant from "the earth, than the true ſpirit of equality is from "that of extreme equality; and, that though the "natural place of virtue be near to liberty, yet "virtue is not nearer to extreme liberty, than it is "to ſlavery."——It is, in general, for the preceding reaſons—in particular, for thoſe which follow, that he will not expect to hear of the French reaping genuine liberty from their conſtitution. "Political

"liberty

" liberty is to be met with only in moderate go-
" vernments. It does not conſiſt in unreſtrained
" freedom. It is a tranquillity of mind, ariſing
" from the opinion each perſon has of his ſafety.
" In order to have this liberty, it is requiſite that
" the government be ſo conſtituted, as one man
" need not be afraid of another.

" When the legiſlative and executive powers are
" united in the ſame perſon, or in the ſame body
" of magiſtrates, there can be no liberty; becauſe
" apprehenſions may ariſe, leſt the ſame monarch,
" or ſenate, (or convention) ſhould enact tyran-
" nical laws, or execute them in a tyrannical
" manner.

" Again, there is no liberty, if the power of
" judging be not ſeparated from the legiſlative and
" executive powers. Were it joined with the
" legiſlative, the life and liberty of the ſubject
" would be expoſed to arbitrary controul; for the
" judge then would be the legiſlator. Were it
" joined to the executive power, the judge might
" behave with all the violence of an oppreſſor.

" There would be an end of every thing, were
" the ſame man, or the ſame body, whether of the
" nobles, or of the people, to exerciſe all the three
" powers—that of enacting laws, that of executing

" the

"the public reſolutions, and that of judging the "crimes and differences of individuals."

What a pity that Monteſquieu did not live to ſee theſe extraordinary times!

"Moſt kingdoms of Europe enjoy a moderate "government, becauſe the Prince, who is inveſted "with the two firſt powers, leaves the third to his "ſubjects. In Turkey, where theſe three powers "are united in the ſultan's perſon, the ſubjects "groan under the weight of a moſt frightful "oppreſſion."

In England, however, where they are diſunited ——But why ſhould I remind my countrymen of a happineſs which they feel every moment of their lives?

"In the republics of Italy, where theſe three "powers are united, there is leſs liberty than in "monarchies. Hence their government is obliged "to have recourſe to as violent methods for its "ſupport, as even that of the Turks: witneſs "the ſtate inquiſitors; and the lion's mouth, into "which every informer may, at all hours, throw "his written accuſations.

"What a ſituation muſt the poor ſubjects be "in, under thoſe republics! The ſame body of "magiſtrates

" magiſtrates are poſſeſſed, as executors of the " laws, of the whole power they have given them- " ſelves in quality of legiſlators. They may " plunder the ſtate by their general determinations; " and, as they have likewiſe the judiciary power " in their hands, every private citizen may be " ruined by their particular deciſions."

It was in the ſpirit of prophecy that Monteſquieu wrote; and it was his own country which he had in contemplation.

There are now more lions' mouths than one, into which the informer, or *denouncer*, may throw his accuſations. We are at no loſs to name a country, in which, though there be nothing external (I mean in the form of its civil conſtitution) to indicate deſpotic ſway, the people feel the ſad effects of it every moment,—" In what a ſituation muſt " poor citizens be, in ſuch a country!" And what ought we to ſay of citizens, who have been ſo deſtitute of caution, and common ſenſe, as to bring themſelves into ſuch a ſituation? May we not ſay of them, ſomething like that which has been ſaid of Harrington, " For want of knowing the nature " of real liberty, they have buſied themſelves in " the purſuit of an imaginary one; and built a " Chalcedon, though they had a Byzantium be- " fore their eyes?" Yes, we may, with ſingular propriety, ſay this ſevere thing of them.——But I know

know who they are, of whom ſuch a thing might be ſaid, with much more propriety, were they to imitate the inſane conduct of the French citizens. I mean—Engliſh ſubjects. Frenchmen have been blameable: but Engliſhmen would be inexcuſable; as they have a Byzantium not merely before their eyes, but actually in their poſſeſſion.

What are the ſteps which the foes of uſeful freedom adopt, with a view to place Engliſhmen on a footing with the French? and what is the object to which the ſteps adopted, are intended to lead? The ſteps adopted are political clubs, and ſocieties; the object to which they are intended to lead is—a Reform.—A Reform of what? Of the Civil government ſolely? No. Of the Eccleſiaſtical government ſolely? No. Of both of theſe at once? Yes: and of more than of both of theſe. The truth is, that it is not a *reform*, but a *revolution* at which they are driving. For, they obviouſly do not wiſh to alter, for the ſake of amending; knowing, no doubt, that, were they to alter in the Church, or in the State, only where they ſaw it practicable to make amendments, very few things indeed would be touched.—Without caring at all about amendments, they ſeem deſirous to alter every thing. They want to give us, in the Civil department, pure democracy; in the Eccleſiaſtical, I know not well what—ſomething, however, neither

honorable to God, nor conducive to the intereſts of his creatures.—Who, of all *the friends of the people*, or of Paine's deſperate band of conſpirators, (many of whom, by the way, are enrolled with *the friends of the people!*) dares deny this? And who, of thoſe who can look with complacency, or indifference, on that profligate, and his inſidious labors, can hope for any thing ſhort of odium and reprobation, from ſuch as think that it would be ill, did not a church poſſeſs piety, and a ſtate probity; and who think that it is well, when a whole nation flouriſh at home, and are reſpected abroad?

Thoſe who would render Engliſhmen and Frenchmen, alike contemptible and unhappy, are not mild reformers; but, violent innovators. Some of them, however, have ſued for a ſofter appellation. But, as they have purſued meaſures beyond all others well calculated to give confidence to the innovator, and ſucceſs to his ſchemes, their ſuit has not been ſucceſsful. I allude to THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE. Strange friends!—who no ſooner take up what they call the people's cauſe, than the people begin to ſuſpect, and dread them; who no ſooner undertake to conſolidate the views of the Britiſh electors, and their repreſentatives, than the legiſlature, and the whole nation, perceive, that the pillars of liberty, and of the empire's grandeur, are about to be ſhaken!

Theſe men pretend to have fixed a point, beyond which they are not to go. But, having admitted into their train, perſons whoſe career is unlimited, and who need nothing to enable them to urge their way to the laſt extremity, except the removal of ſuch obſtacles as are to be encountered in the firſt ſtages; it is not their progreſs, ſo much as that of their aſſociates, which the real friends of the people have to watch, and provide againſt. They act in a manner very ſimilar to that in which the States General of France acted, in the year 1789. The States General did not propoſe remedying the evils of abſolute monarchy, by adopting thoſe of abſolute democracy: no, nor did one Frenchman of common ſenſe, when the States aſſembled, ſo much as figure to himſelf a proceedure ſo extravagant as that which has ſince been witneſſed. They did not think of deluging the land with licentiouſneſs: they only thought of letting in upon it, ſuch a ſtream of liberty, as might ſerve to refreſh, and fertilize it. They, therefore, ſet about opening the popular ſluice to a moderate extent; but no ſooner had they done this, than the torrent, influenced by evil ſpirits, encreaſed and enlarged it—ſo as to make one wide waſte of almoſt every thing human and divine.

The conſequences that would reſult to the Britiſh nation, from any club or ſociety's being

permitted, at this criſis, to indulge its whim of reforming, might be as pernicious to them, as thoſe have been to the French, which have reſulted from the efforts of their firſt aſſembly of reformers. They might be thus pernicious—becauſe the preſent period, though not known to be pregnant with calamities to Britain, is yet ſuch as exhibits ground for ſerious apprehenſion. It is ſuch a period, that an attentive obſerver beholds in it, ſomewhat unuſual occaſionally employing the thoughts of almoſt every deſcription of perſons. He beholds the ill diſpoſed, and ill informed, projecting ſchemes which lead no where except to ruin; while the ill diſpoſed and well informed, approve of their ſchemes, and wiſh them ſucceſs: He beholds the well diſpoſed, but ill informed, willing to travel in the right road; but ſo puzzled, through the mixture of true and falſe lights held out to them, as to be totally unable to diſtinguiſh it: And, finally, he beholds the well diſpoſed, and well informed, decided, indeed, as to the courſe they ſhall purſue; yet, grieved that one deſcription of their countrymen ſhould through ignorance, and that another ſhould through wickedneſs, be actuated by ſo much perverſeneſs; while a third experiences the miſeries of ſuſpenſe, in a matter which very nearly concerns them, and their poſterity. He beholds, in ſhort, the operation of ſuch a meaſure of diſcontent, doubt, and anxiety,

as induces him to wiſh for other times in which to aim at conſtitutional reformation; and to juſtify the conduct of thoſe who have lately tried to avert calamities that are ſomething more than poſſible.——As a man of diſcernment, he perceives that theſe times have been productive of cauſes of uneaſineſs, which thoſe clothed with authority ought no longer to endure: As a patriot, he laments, that the people ſhould hitherto have been ſafe, without having felt themſelves ſecure: While, as a man of common underſtanding, he wonders, as well he may, that all which he has to regret, has proceeded from a deſire to imitate a nation, whoſe wiſdom has been greatly outweighed by their folly; and whoſe proſperity has been ſo ſmall, as not to be viſible. Upon the whole, his concluſion is, that, let the conſequences to be expected from a reform be what they may, the preſent moment is not that in which a diſcriminating, honeſt man, would take the ſteps neceſſary to lead to them.

Nor do the preſent times appear to ſuch a man, to reſemble thoſe, at which politicians have thought of deranging the ſyſtem of affairs, for the ſake of reform. Times ſuch as thoſe, have uſually been times of public oppreſſion; or of national diſtruſt, both of government, and of the legiſlature, founded on a ſenſe of national diſaſters. Now, the preſent

is

is not a time of public oppreſſion; nor is it one in which the nation diſtruſts either government, or the legiſlature.——But, the advocates of parliamentary reform, who have, for the moſt part, been young men and unexperienced legiſlators, have inſiſted upon all times being proper enough for making experiments on the conſtitution. Men, however, of mature age, and of full experience, have thought and acted otherwiſe. They have contended, that the degrees of things—or what Mr. Burke calls the leſs, and the more—together with ſeaſons, and the circumſtances of ſeaſons, ought to be well conſidered, and liberally allowed for, whenever the conſtitution is concerned; eſpecially if a project be to be entered upon, which, like that now in the contemplation of certain perſons, is known to be ſuch as may, through injudicious management, produce effects ſufficient to lay in ruins the whole edifice of an empire's glory.

Mr. Pitt, the beſt judge as well of what the nation wants, as of what it poſſeſſes, ſaid, laſt year, that he ſhould have no objection whatever to a reform, were there any thing like a certainty, that it could be come at *peaceably* and *ſafely*. Many of his friends have ſince been of opinion, that, being a miniſter, at that criſis, he ought not to have gone ſo far.——His opponents, however, have profeſſed themſelves to be of a different opinion. They have

alleged, that he ought to have proceeded a great deal farther—there being no danger of any interruption to the public peace, and ſafety. But thoſe gentlemen have powerful nerves. It may be, that ſomething tragical—ſomething calculated to aſtoniſh, and confound, appears to them eſſential to a reform. There certainly are among them, perſons who are excellent judges of ſtage effect.

Is it not unfortunate, that a miniſter, whoſe great abilities and important ſervices to his country, have given his opinions in parliament a very extraordinary weight, ſhould diſagree, upon a grand conſtitutional queſtion, with a ſet of gentlemen ſo capable, as the race of reformers are, of attracting public notice? Not at all. It would be highly unfortunate, if he did not diſagree with them; as, in that caſe, "The commonwealth might ſuſtain "ſome detriment." He, and they, cannot poſſibly agree, *in theſe times*, on a queſtion of parliamentary reform. For it is probable that he thinks with Monteſquieu, that the evils of the conſtitution, even allowing them to be what ſome have ſuppoſed them, are yet, by no means, ſo much to be deprecated as thoſe of a violent reform—which is the only ſort of reform that can ever take place at a conjuncture like this; and, alſo, that, having contemplated the various degrees of attainable freedom with England, and France, in his mind,

mind, he is perſuaded, that, while liberty itſelf is not worth the higheſt poſſible price, licentiouſneſs is unworthy of the very loweſt.

The French have, for ſeveral months, appeared in queſt of liberty, and equality. The one they have miſſed, becauſe, either wilfully, or ignorantly, they have moved in a path which conducts not to her temple. The other, they can never find, becauſe, in a country like their's, ſhe cannot poſſibly be generated.

The Engliſh, on the other hand, have long been in full poſſeſſion of Liberty. As for Equality,—that they ſhun as the prime of ſublunary curſes. But Equality might become more than ſuch a curſe: It would be a ſort of curſe in heaven itſelf, as may be inferred from the exiſtence of various orders of celeſtial beings.

The liberty of the French, and the liberty of the Engliſh, are of very different characters. The former merits no other appellation than that of licentiouſneſs: and, in its operation, it is a tyranny of the moſt deſtructive kind.

In France, as well as here, there are three grand eſtates of the realm; eſtates, however, which differ from ours in regard both to their names, and

to their functions. For example, they are not called King, Lords, and Commons; nor yet the Nation, the Law, and the King; they are called the Mob, the Convention, and the People. As to the office, and the power of each, the one has never been defined, and the other is ſubject to no ſort of controul from the laws. It accordingly happens, that the people very frequently rob one another; that the Convention proſcribes, and robs the people—eſpecially ſuch of them as are rich, and of noble lineage; and that the Mob, the real ſovereign of France, denounces, robs, and murders, without reaſon or meaſure, either the deputers or the deputies, either the innocent or the guilty.

In Britain, liberty is not licentiouſneſs; but, ſomething that imparts ſecurity, with regard at once to property, reputation, religion, liberty, and life; ſomething that has long rendered the Britiſh people proſperous, and renowned, above the common lot of nations. It is known to us, and believed by moſt others, to be ſomewhat of a nature extremely genial and beatifying. Except Chriſtianity, indeed, mortal man is furniſhed with nothing ſo capable, as is the Engliſh Conſtitution, of diffuſing uſeful light, and order, and joy, over the face of the earth.

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The difference, then, between the condition of the Engliſh, and that of the French, with reſpect to civil liberty, is great. It ought to be ſo. The former have acted ſo as to deſerve well; the latter ſo as to deſerve ill. Both came from the woods (the French firſt by the way) bringing with them the ſame elements of laws. But the Engliſh began early, and, with but a few interruptions, have continued forming, with wary hands, a ſubſtantial, ſtately, uſeful ſyſtem, out of the elements they poſſeſſed: while the French have appeared as if they wanted both diſpoſitions, and genius, to avail themſelves properly of the advantages bequeathed by their anceſtors. At length, however, they have begun to examine their materials: and it is alleged, that they proceed with all that celerity, and regardleſſneſs of error, which befit their character. Nay, ſome ſay, that, although they have been engaged only a few months, in a taſk like that which occupied our countrymen many centuries; yet, they have well nigh finiſhed it—and, in ſuch a manner, as to leave behind ſcarcely a veſtige of any of the valuable materials upon which they had to work. They have, it ſeems, buſied themſelves, not in improving, but in deſtroying. Mr. Burke has told the world (no man living was capable of telling it ſo well) what the things are which they have madly done; and alſo what thoſe are which, had they

been

been endowed with a particle of common ſenſe, they would have left for ever undone.

Such other thoughts as have occurred to me concerning the relative degrees of liberty enjoyed in Britain, and in France, I ſhall reſerve for a ſubſequent page.

Under the notion of Equality, the French aim at a ſtate of univerſal depreſſion, and miſery; a ſtate which baffles all definition, all deſcription, all conception. They aim at a ſtate which commenced in iniquity, and muſt terminate in iniquity;—at a ſtate which no ſooner appears, than it preſents us with princes of the firſt order trampled under foot by the vileſt of the human race; with an inſulted, diſinherited, degraded nobility, together with a ſcandalized, ruined, expatriated clergy; a ſtate which exhibits, at every ſtep, from the much-lamented, martyred monarch; down to the newly enfranchized, beggarly citizen — ſome flagrant mark of miſhapen folly, of conſummate treachery, of abominable cruelty, or of unparalleled impiety. ——"Other nations have been wicked; but the "French are the firſt who have been wicked upon "principle."——In other countries, and at other times, the blood of the innocent has ſent up its cries to the heavens; and offended Omnipotence has

has ſtretched forth his red right hand. But in France, and in theſe times, the blood of the innocent drenches the earth, and yet calls not out for retribution; or, if it does, its voice is withheld, for a ſeaſon, from the ear of man—in order, no doubt, that he may be amazed, when he beholds ſignal vengeance overtaking a people, the meaſure of whoſe guilt hath long been more than full.

I have already pointed out ſome of the effects that would flow from an equal diſtribution of fortune, in regard to ſpecie, commercial property, land, and rank: and I have done ſo almoſt ſolely to ſhew, how fatal ſuch effects would be to the happineſs of any nation that had become powerful, affluent, and refined. I have alſo hinted at the impracticability of all ſchemes, in France, or elſewhere, of univerſal, and complete Equality. And I am now to ſtate, in as few words as I can, that this impracticability is occaſioned, in part, by obſtacles ariſing out of the ordinary progreſs of civil ſociety; but chiefly by ſuch as have their foundation in human nature—in the conformation of the body, and of the mind.

The conteſt reſpecting the comparative influence of the powers of the body, and of thoſe of the mind, in the conduct of war, had been decided when the hiſtory of Cataline's conſpiracy was written.

written. And it is now ſome time ſince the queſtion reſpecting the comparative influence of the ſame powers, in the conduct of affairs in general, was inveſtigated and ſolved. The concluſion in the latter caſe, agrees with that in the former, in whatever it admits with regard to the neceſſity of a co-operation between the two ſorts of powers: But it differs from it in this, that it points to periods in which each ſort prevails over the other. It points, on the one hand, to rude and uncultivated periods in the hiſtory of a people; on the other, to civilized and poliſhed periods in their hiſtory: And it imports, that in periods of the firſt deſcription, the powers of the body have more influence than thoſe of the mind; but that, in thoſe of the ſecond, the powers of the mind have more influence than thoſe of the body.

Among rude nations, perſonal accompliſhments, eſpecially ſuch as indicate ſuperior agility and ſtrength, procure authority. They did ſo, in many inſtances, in ancient times: and they do ſo, in ſeveral inſtances, in modern times. They do ſo among moſt of the ſavage tribes in North America; among moſt of the hordes in Tartary; and among many of the nations of Africa. Nay, they are ſaid to have done ſo univerſally among the Africans, till their ſovereignties became hereditary.

Perſonal

Perſonal accompliſhments, then, lead to authority among rude nations. But, where authority exiſts, equality is no more. Very true. Yet authority always has exiſted among ſavages, and barbarians; becauſe there always has exiſted a variety in their perſonal accompliſhments. At no time, therefore, can there have been among them ſuch a thing as univerſal equality. This inference is not to the purpoſe of republican levellers; and it is to be ſuppoſed that I ſhall enjoy but little of their good opinion, when I allege, that the ſort of thing which they term equality, never was known to ſubſiſt in any ſociety of men, whether rude, or refined.

Yet ſuch a thing may be witneſſed, one of theſe days. The French may, through ſome means or other, acquire as happy a knack at creating, as they are known to have at deſtroying. If they do, they may think of forming a new earth—not, however, that righteouſneſs may dwell therein; but, that it may exhibit a race of mortals conſtructed, like their departments, according to geometrical rules, and bleſſed with all the natural, and impreſcriptible *Rights of Man*.

" Satan, with his perverted crew, may raiſe
" From the conflagrant maſs, purg'd and refind,
" New heav'ns, new earth, ages of endleſs date.

Among

Among nations that deſerve the appellation of civilized, mental accompliſhments procure authority; and give riſe to thoſe other cauſes of difference in the condition of mankind, which help to conſtitute inequality: they act, too, in ſpite of ſuperior fortune, and ſuperior rank. It is true, that, on ſome occaſions, a graceful exterior has conſiderable influence. But ſuch occaſions are few, never critical, and ſeldom intereſting.——There are two men, who, with other perſons (no matter how ill-informed their minds), might have ſhone in ſuch places, as aſſembly-rooms, and theatres: But they could have ſhone no where elſe. Through means, however, of their mental powers, to which little or no ſupport is derived from exterior advantages, they are enabled to ſtand, though on different ſites, the higheſt, and the moſt conſpicuous of Britiſh commoners.

A better memory; a more fertile imagination; ſtronger powers of abſtraction; a happier talent for reaſoning;—whatever, in ſhort, thoſe things be, which mankind denominate mental faculties, each of them, when exerted in an unuſually high degree, invariably begets inequality. Accordingly, perſons might be named in the church, in the law, and in the ſenate, eminent, no doubt, in conſequence of the honors conferred on them by their ſovereign; but who, merely through the exertion

of

of their great talents, would have attained to uncommon eminence in their reſpective orders, had they never been diſtinguiſhed by any mark of royal favor.

Nor is the influence of the powers of the mind confined to the upper ſpheres of life. It is felt through all the gradations of ſocial beings; and the obvious effect of it is—inequality.—Thus, the farmer who diſcerns the moſt juſtly the nature of ſoils, and foreſees the moſt clearly the changes of weather; the artificer who contrives with the greateſt ingenuity, and executes with the greateſt ſkill; the money-dealer who calculates the moſt accurately, and ſpeculates the moſt acutely; he, in fine, who, in his calling, employs faculties of mind better fitted to enſure ſucceſs, than thoſe employed by ſuch as follow the ſame calling, will always be the ſuperior man; he, and they, will never appear upon the footing of equality.——But, the faculties of the mind, conſidered by themſelves, are not the only cauſe of inequality among perſons occupied in the ſame manner. Cloſer application may occaſion a difference. Cloſer application, with equal faculties, always gives a decided advantage; and cloſer application, with faculties conſiderably inferior, in many caſes, yields equal, in ſome, greater advantages.

Look around among the rich, and you ſhall ſee many who, through the joint efforts of genius and induſtry, have become the architects of their own fortunes; and who, in acquiring their fortunes, have gone far towards deſtroying that equality which democrats admire. If you do ſo, you are not likely to condemn them for having thus raiſed themſelves above the level of thoſe who originally ſtood as high as they did: you are more likely, I imagine, to praiſe them; although every time you do ſo, you lend your countenance to thoſe who have wilfully deviated from that ſtate of ſameneſs, and ignorance, which both the ſpirit, and the form, of pure democracy tend to introduce into the world.

Topics ſuch as theſe, need not the aid of much argument. For who is he who has ſeen, and reflected, ſo little as not to be perſuaded, that, in every liberal employment, ſuperior faculties of mind; and, in moſt mechanical ones, greater ſtrength of body; bring forward the poſſeſſor to notice, and raiſe him to a new ſtation in ſociety? And if he be ſo perſuaded, you have no occaſion to tell him, that, ſo long as one man remains much wiſer, or much ſtronger, than his neighbour; juſt ſo long will there be conſiderable inequalities among mankind.—Such inequalities, no human means can prevent; becauſe man's

finite

finite powers cannot equalize the gifts of nature. Engliſhmen, I think, would not trouble themſelves to look around for the means of preventing them, did they believe that they could be diſcovered. For, as yet, they are not quite inimical to honeſt, and honorable diſtinctions. They have not diſgraced their kind, by declaring war againſt genius, and its fair productions; nor have they abſurdly decreed, that a human being, deſtined by his Maker for active purſuits, ought to adopt meaſures which ſuppoſe the abſence of all the principal motives to emulation.

Did I ſuppoſe that doubts could long remain in any one's breaſt, reſpecting the impoſſibility of eſtabliſhing equality in an extenſive, populous country, I ſhould continue the diſcuſſion of this ſubject, and, paſſing from the contemplation of man, not only aim at ſhewing how far the beauty, the harmony, and the extacies of the celeſtial manſions, are ſaid to be promoted by a variety of high orders; but likewiſe deſcend, and point out in what manner greater degrees of ſtrength, of cunning, or of courage, beget authority, the parent of inequality, in the irrational world. But I can bring myſelf to ſuppoſe no ſuch thing. I therefore affirm, that neither among poliſhed nations; nor among ſavage tribes; nor yet among the brutes that periſh;—that neither in the heaven

above; nor in the earth beneath; nor in the waters under the earth; is there to be found any thing that at all reſembles the equality ſought after by the new-fangled citizens of France.

This equality of theirs, would be a groſs and palpable deterioration of the affairs of the world. But it is impoſſible to eſtabliſh it. Nature cannot, by any means, be bent to a purpoſe ſo abſurd; while nations who are aware that nature ought to be humoured, not croſſed, will not permit her ſacred laws to be violated.——I ſhall ſay nothing, in this place, of the chaſtiſement which providence may be preparing for a people, who, unadmoniſhed by the fate of every other people, ſeem reſolved to continue adding to the monument of their folly, and preſumption, till its top reach the heavens.

But, were the execution of this ſame equalizing project, entirely within the compaſs of man's power; ſtill we ſhould not be very ſolicitous to effect it. For it is more than probable, that we ſhould not chooſe to follow the French into the woods, in order to unlearn thoſe things, to attain the knowledge of which our venerable forefathers forſook their dreary receſſes. And why ſhould we not chooſe to do this? Why? but becauſe we are convinced, that our preſent reſtrained condition—a condition ſuited alike to yield comforts, and to

ward off injuries—is much preferable to that ſtate of liberty and equality, which we ſhould experience in the woods. We have heard, indeed, of the enjoyments of a certain ſtate bordering on that which has been called a ſtate of nature: but then—we ſuſpect the poets of having greatly over-rated them.—The liberty of the French reſembles that which we ſhould enjoy in the woods; for it allows mankind to do exactly as much miſchief as they have power to do. As to their equality, being the abſence of whatever ſerves to raiſe man out of the duſt, it reminds one of nothing more than of the peace ſaid to have been granted by the Romans to ſome of their vanquiſhed foes, whoſe country had been reduced to a ſolitude.

Britiſh ſubjects, proud, as they have reaſon to be, of having the good fortune to call themſelves Britiſh ſubjects—they aim at no ſuch thing as French equality. It is, in their opinion, quite enough if they enjoy equality in regard to their laws. This they do;—nay they—and they only, of all the nations of the earth, have done ſo for ages. Their unexampled proſperity is the happy produce of their equal laws; and it will, I truſt, be a perpetual memorial of their beneficent influence.

—The laws by which Britiſh ſubjects are governed, have ſignificantly been ſtyled *equal laws:* and

their moſt valuable, and glorious property is, to confer *equal rights*. This Mr. Dundas lately aſſerted in the Houſe of Commons, in contradiction to ſomething that had been advanced by one of the republican members: and, in doing ſo, he did well. I am always ready to allow much for deſert, and diſtinction—for learning, wiſdom, eloquence, heroiſm, fortune, rank. But, while I, and others as well as I, allow enough for theſe, we know that they aſſure to thoſe that poſſeſs them in the higheſt degree, no legal advantage, no ſpecies of favor in the diſpenſation of juſtice, to which the loweſt, the pooreſt, and the leaſt informed among us, is not fully entitled. Add to this, that there is no incentive to uſeful, or brilliant deeds, which our laws hold out to any, and not to all.——There is no virtue which they do not reward, no vice which they do not puniſh, with an impartial hand. The indigent, and low-born, are of as much eſtimation in their eye, as are the opulent, and nobly deſcended. Our priſons now contain many perſons who have always been poor; and many who are of obſcure birth. But they alſo contain many who have been rich—who are ſtill rich; and ſome who are of illuſtrious extraction. In our times, a peer, not of the loweſt order, ſuffered death for his contempt of the laws: and our fathers have told us of the fate of ſeveral peers, who, in their days, were brought to the block for their treaſonable conduct.——The ſame

equal juſtice continues to be diſtributed among us: and Thomas Paine, the moſt culpable, becauſe the moſt impudent and perſevering of traitors, for whom a hurdle, and a halter ought long ſince to have been prepared—even this fellow had as many, and as great advantages allowed him, the other day, at Guildhall, as would have been allowed to any one of his Majeſty's ſubjects, upon appearing to anſwer to a ſimilar charge. Yet, between the caſe of ſuch a citizen, and ſuch a ſubject, there would be this difference upon their appearing in a court of law: the latter might, but the former certainly could not, find twelve Engliſhmen to act as a jury, who could, with ſo much as the ſhadow of truth, be called *his peers* *. Britain, ſuch is the goodneſs of Providence, is not prolific of thoſe whoſe principles lead them to abet atheiſm and perjury, fraud and rapine, aſſaſſination and maſſacre.

When I recollect the contents of Paine's nefarious publication, and the great patience with which a noble judge, and twelve uncommonly reſpectable jurymen, heard his Counſel defend it, for ſeveral hours; I am forcibly ſtruck with the extraordinary degree of freedom in writing, and in

* It is wonderful that Paine's Counſel did not lay hold of the circumſtance of the jury's not being his peers, and urge it as a reaſon for his exculpation.

ſpeaking, with which the inhabitants of this iſland are indulged. Every reflecting, temperate Engliſhman muſt be the ſame. And it will be far from unbecoming in the gentlemen who have aſſociated under pretence of preſerving THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS, to celebrate the peculiar happineſs of their countrymen in this reſpect.

But, the liberty of our preſs has already been celebrated, by almoſt every political writer who has been capable of conceiving its value; though, chiefly, by the writers of Great-Britain, and France. Theſe have ſhewn, how very far from complete the liberty of the preſs is, in all modern republics;—how very near to nothing, in all modern monarchies, the Engliſh excepted. And it will be the talk of the hiſtorians of the preſent period, to mark the difference of the degrees in which it ſubſiſts in the democracy of France, juſt come from the hands of Utopian framers, whoſe heads are enveloped with a new and refulgent light; and in the monarchy of England, which had its beginnings in unregenerated times, and which has been tranſmitted to us through many generations of unenlightened beings. It will be for them to relate, on the one hand, how legiſlators, who have talked of diſpenſing popular freedom to all the nations of the earth, have contrived, that no individual of their own nation ſhall approach what we conſider

as the grand palladium of every truly popular conſtitution, without being in danger of having eternal ſilence impoſed upon him, by the armed men who lurk in its womb; on the other hand, how a ſucceſſion of legiſlators, who never ſet much value on excluſive popular freedom, but who, nevertheleſs, have given to the world almoſt the whole of the genuine freedom which now adorns it, have contrived, that any individual of their nation may, at any time, reſort to the grand palladium of their conſtitution, and, as often as he does ſo, experience at once ſafety and protection.——Is this really the caſe with the French, who boaſt of poſſeſſing certain new lights through which they have ſeen clearly into the moſt obſcure receſſes of all former conſtitutions civil and religious; and who, in conſequence of what they pretend to have ſeen, affect to commiſerate the millions who live under thoſe conſtitutions? Let the ſurviving few of their countrymen, who have been ſo unfortunate as to treat, however moderately and juſtly, either of the laws, or of the law-givers of emancipated France, anſwer the queſtion—by recounting the injuries they have ſuſtained in their property, and in their perſons. And is the caſe of the Engliſh ſuch as has been repreſented—of the Engliſh, who boaſt of poſſeſſing no new lights, and who ſpeak modeſtly of thoſe glorious, ancient ones, which they enjoy as their birthright;—but who, never-

theleſs, are occaſionally impelled, by their humanity, to pity nations doomed to paſs their days under vitious forms of government, profligately adminiſtered: of all which devoted nations, the French of the preſent hour appear to them to ſtand the foremoſt? For an oral anſwer to this queſtion, I refer to the well-informed and candid, in any diſtrict of the Britiſh dominions. For a written one, we may have recourſe to the dead. "Nothing "is more apt to ſurprize a foreigner, than the ex- "treme liberty, which we enjoy in this country, of "communicating whatever we pleaſe to the public, "and of openly cenſuring every meaſure entered "into by the king or his miniſters. If the ad- "miniſtration reſolve upon war, it is affirmed, "that, either wilfully or ignorantly, they miſtake "the intereſts of the nation; and that peace, in "the preſent ſituation of affairs, is infinitely pre- "ferable. If the paſſion of the miniſters lie to- "wards peace, our political writers breathe no- "thing but war and devaſtation, and repreſent "the pacific conduct of the government as mean "and puſillanimous. And this is a liberty which "is not indulged in any other government, either "republican, or monarchial:" Thus wrote Mr. Hume.—Sir William Blackſtone has expreſſed himſelf as follows: "The liberty of the preſs is, "indeed, eſſential to the nature of a free ſtate: "but this conſiſts in laying no previous reſtraints

"upon

" upon publications, and not in freedom from
" cenſure for criminal matter when publiſhed.
" Every freeman has an undoubted right to lay
" what ſentiments he pleaſes before the publick:
" to forbid this is to deſtroy the freedom of the
" preſs: but if he publiſhes what is improper,
" miſchievous, or illegal, he muſt take the conſe-
" quence of his own temerity." This is the law of England; and it is reaſonable and wiſe.—— In France they have a law of a different nature. There, previous reſtraints are laid upon publications; and every man is not allowed to have an undoubted right to lay what ſentiments he pleaſes before the public. The ſtate of the French democrats, in ſhort, reſembles that of the Roman imperialiſts, one of whom was capitally convicted, becauſe he had called a fellow citizen the laſt of the Romans! I am aware of the impunity with which an inhabitant of Paris might, for a conſiderable time, have called Louis XVI. the laſt of French kings. But I pretend not to know what would be the fate of that man, who ſhould venture to call Marat, or Robeſpierre, or Thomas Paine, or Terence Froſt, the laſt of French citizens.

The ſubject of the liberty of the Preſs is ſo important, and has of late engroſſed ſo much of the public attention, that I have, almoſt imperceptibly, digreſſed into it. I now return to the conſideration

of

of civil liberty in general, reſpecting which I ſhall expreſs only a very few ideas.

The members of the National Convention of France, like the emperor of Morocco, are at once Lawgivers and Judges: The office, however, of Executioner, which His Highneſs chooſes to retain, they perform by proxy.

It would be wonderful, if, both as lawgivers, and as judges (characters which can never, according to any juſt notion either of theory, or of practice, be ſafely united in the ſame body of men) they always acted wiſely. But they have taken care not to excite wonder on this account. In both their legiſlative, and their judiciary capacity, we find them abundantly defective, whether we attend to their procedure, or to their deciſions.

In the Britiſh parliament, a queſtion is diſcuſſed five, or ſix times; and the laſt diſcuſſion is often at the diſtance of five, or ſix weeks from the firſt. The ſalutary effects of ſo much deliberation, are obvious to every man of ſound underſtanding.—In the French National Convention, a queſtion becomes, without any previous intimation of it being given, the ſubject of debate; and after two, or three hours of alternate hiſſing, and applauding, it is pronounced to be law. The pernicious conſequences

ſequences of ſo much precipitation, are already notorious in every country on earth.

If a queſtion introduced into the Convention reſpect a man's life, then, let him be as guiltleſs as he can be, he is brought to the bar, without any ſufficient ſpace being allowed for preparing his defence; and is arraigned, tried, condemned, and made to paſs from the bar—to the gibbet—and thence to the grave, before his friends, who live within a poſt or two of Paris, can poſſibly learn that he has been denounced.

If a queſtion propoſed in the Convention reſpect a man's property, then the diſcuſſion of it is extravagant, and the deciſion upon it iniquitous, exactly in proportion to the quantity of property to be diſpoſed of. If the quantity be ſmall, ſome hopes may be entertained of juſtice being adminiſtered: But, if it happen to be great, that ſcale which contains the accuſation is made to preponderate, by the weight of the prejudices, paſſions, and falſehoods, which the judges order to be thrown into it. The cravings of the ſtate, in a caſe like this, are alleged to be very great: and the ſafety of the commonwealth is affirmed to be paramount to every other conſideration. Such arguments might conſole one, upon being forced to make ſuch ſacrifices, did the loſs of property make up the ſum of

his

his misfortunes. This, however, is by no means the caſe. The odium brought upon him, partly in conſequence of his having had property to loſe, and partly in conſequence of his having been deprived of it through charges which he was not permitted to refute, obliges him to quit his country: and, when he is once gone, his countrymen take no further concern about him—unleſs it be to contrive how they may effectually prevent his return.——The parliament of Great-Britain will, indeed, ſtand in need of being reformed, when its members thus ſport with the property, the character, and the lives of thoſe, over whoſe intereſt and happineſs they are appointed to watch.

Near the beginning of this letter, I ſtated the object of it to be, to give ſome ſort of account of the ſtate of the Britiſh nation. But, as I have proceeded, the ſtate of the French nation alſo has come under conſideration: and perhaps what I have ſaid of it, conſtitutes the only valuable part of the letter. Engliſhmen, in general, may think ſo. For, ſtrangers to oppreſſion and want, they need not to be told much reſpecting the abſolute ſtate of their country, in order to reconcile them to their condition. They need only to hear a few things of its relative ſtate. It is requiſite that they ſhould hear of this, becauſe it is known, that deſigning men have it in contemplation to try to perſuade

perſuade them, that a certain *reformed* nation are about to become happier than they have ever been; and, becauſe it is to be feared, that the deluſion attempted to be practiſed on them, will, if not ſpeedily baniſhed, be carried to ſuch a length, as to induce them to wiſh for the adoption of meaſures through which they would eventually ceaſe to enjoy that real, unequivocal happineſs, the ſum of which never appeared truly aſtoniſhing, till it came to be contraſted with the ſcanty meaſure of happineſs enjoyed by that ſame *reformed* nation.

In my progreſs through theſe pages, a good deal of attention has been paid to the nature both of the Engliſh monarchy, and of the French democracy; and ſome has been beſtowed on the aptneſs of the one, as well as of the other, to promote the good, or the ill ſucceſs of a people.

Nor have the objects kept in view by the legiſlators of each country, been diſregarded. Civil Liberty, for inſtance, the expreſs and glorious object of Engliſh legiſlators, has often been touched upon. And, while this has been the caſe, the objects of thoſe who legiſlate for the French, viz. Liberty, and Equality—in queſt of which that infatuated people have ventured upon an ocean of perils, amid whoſe waves they already ſee their ſhattered bark about to ſink—have been honoured

with

with due praiſe. All, it is true, was not expreſſed that occurred on either topic. For I knew, that, in ſpeaking all the truth, enough muſt have been ſaid in approbation of the political ſyſtem of the Engliſh, and in diſapprobation of that of the French, to draw upon me a ſuſpicion of having intended to write nothing but a romance. Yet, enough was doubtleſs ſaid, to attract very forcibly to the one; and to repel, with equal force, from the other.

Something, too, has been advanced, with regard to the preſent faculties and reſources of the Engliſh, and of the French. A full and fair view of theſe, would effectually determine any rational man, in his choice of being a Britiſh ſubject, or a French citizen. But, ſuch a view I have not attempted to give; nor ſhall I now attempt to give it, as I might, were I to do ſo, incur the reproach of being too much elated on beholding the flouriſhing ſtate of my country, and of being diſpoſed to take pleaſure in inſulting over the wretched deſtiny of fallen France. The following imperfect ſketch ſhall ſuffice: and Mr. Burke's eloquent pen ſhall firſt be employed. "Compute your gains: ſee "what is got by thoſe extravagant and preſump-"tuous ſpeculations which have taught your "leaders to deſpiſe all their predeceſſors, and all "their contemporaries, and even to deſpiſe them-"ſelves, until the moment in which they became "truly

" truly deſpicable. By following thoſe falſe lights,
" France has bought undiſguiſed calamities at
" a higher price than any nation has purchaſed the
" moſt unequivocal bleſſings. France has bought
" poverty by crime. France has not ſacrificed
" her virtue to her intereſt; but ſhe has aban-
" doned her intereſt, that ſhe might proſtitute her
" virtue. All other nations have begun the fabric
" of a new government, or the reformation of an
" old, by eſtabliſhing originally, or by enforcing
" with greater exactneſs, ſome rites or other of
" religion. All other people have laid the founda-
" tion of civil freedom, in ſeverer manners, and a
" ſyſtem of more auſtere and maſculine morality.
" France, when ſhe let looſe the reins of regal
" authority, doubled the licence of a ferocious diſ-
" ſoluteneſs in manners, and of an inſolent irre-
" ligion in opinions and practices; and has ex-
" tended through all ranks of life, as if ſhe were
" communicating ſome privilege, or laying open
" ſome ſecluded benefit, all the unhappy cor-
" ruptions that uſually were the diſeaſe of wealth
" and power. This is one of the new principles of
" equality in France.

" France, by the perfidy of her leaders, has
" utterly diſgraced the tone of lenient council in
" the cabinets of princes, and diſarmed it of its
" moſt potent topics. She has ſanctified the dark
" ſuſpicious maxims of tyrannous diſtruſt; and

" taught

" taught kings to tremble at (what will hereafter
" be called) the deluſive plauſibilities of moral
" politicians. Sovereigns will conſider thoſe who
" adviſe them to place an unlimited confidence in
" their people, as ſubverters of their thrones; as
" traitors who aim at their deſtruction, by leading
" their eaſy good-nature, under ſpecious pretences,
" to admit combinations of bold and faithleſs men
" into a participation of their power. This alone
" (if there were nothing elſe) is an irreparable ca-
" lamity to you and to mankind. Remember that
" your parliament of Paris told your king, that, in
" calling the ſtates together, he had nothing to
" fear but the prodigal exceſs of their zeal in pro-
" viding for the ſupport of the throne.

" It is right that ſuch men * ſhould hide their
" heads. It is right that they ſhould bear their
" part in the ruin which their counſel has brought
" on their ſovereign, and their country. Such
" ſanguine declarations tend to lull authority
" aſleep, to encourage it raſhly to engage in
" perilous adventures of untried policy; to neglect
" thoſe proviſions, preparations, and precautions,
" which diſtinguiſh benevolence from imbecility;
" and without which no man can anſwer for the
" ſalutary effect of an abſtract plan of govern-
" ment or of freedom. For want of theſe, they

* Fayette, Rochefaucault, Egalité, &c.

" have

" have ſeen the medicine of the ſtate corrupted
" into its poiſon. They have ſeen the French
" rebel againſt a mild and lawful monarch, with
" more fury, outrage, and inſult, than ever any
" people has been known to riſe againſt the moſt
" illegal uſurper, or the moſt ſanguinary tyrant.
" Their reſiſtance was made to conceſſion; their
" revolt was from protection; their blow was
" aimed at an hand holding out graces, favours,
" and immunities.

" This was unnatural. The reſt is in order. They
" have found their puniſhment in their ſucceſs.
" Laws overturned; tribunals ſubverted; induſtry
" without vigour; commerce expiring; the re-
" venue unpaid, yet the people impoveriſhed;
" a church pillaged, and a ſtate not relieved;
" civil and military anarchy made the conſtitution
" of the kingdom; every thing human and divine
" ſacrificed to the idol of public credit, and na-
" tional bankruptcy the conſequence; and, to
" crown all, the paper ſecurities of new, precarious,
" tottering power, the diſcredited paper ſecurities
" of impoveriſhed fraud, and beggared rapine,
" held out as a currency for the ſupport of an
" empire; in lieu of the two great recognized
" ſpecies that repreſent the laſting conventional
" credit of mankind, which diſappeared and hid
" themſelves in the earth from whence they came,

" when the principle of property, whoſe creatures
" and repreſentatives they are, was ſyſtematically
" ſubverted."

Little, if any thing, needs to be added to this animated, comprehenſive, juſt delineation. He who admires not the ſtrain of virtue, and of religion, which runs through the performance from which it is taken *, is no friend to Chriſtianity: he who can condemn the political principles which at once adorn it, and enhance its value, is, be his profeſſions what they may, an enemy to the conſtitution of England.

Moſt of the calamities enumerated by Mr. Burke, are the natural reſult of the civil conſtitution that was adopted by the French, upon the ſubverſion of their monarchy. But ſince Mr. Burke wrote, the French have entirely changed their Conſtitution; and the change which they have made, has been pernicious—exactly in proportion as it has been great.——At this moment, there is not a nation in Europe towards which the French can look, without beholding an enemy. Already, indeed, they (as was the caſe with their anceſtors under Louis XIV.) are vainly defending

* Reflections on the Revolution in France.

themſelves againſt a combination of powers, enraged through their diſregard of the laws of nations, and their luſt of univerſal dominion—of a dominion more execrable, by far, than that which Louis is ſaid to have meditated, being, at once, more plauſible, and more deſtructive of the higher intereſts of ſociety. Louis's project was much leſs provoking, than that of thoſe who have put the laſt hand to the overthrow of his throne. For his procedure, though very unjuſtifiable, was not wanting in dignity. His inſolence was as nothing, when compared with that of the preſent rulers of his deſolated territories: and it never entered into his general ſyſtem, to ſeek ſucceſs by meddling in the domeſtic concerns of independent nations—by offering rewards to ſubjects for aſſaſſinating their ſovereigns; by deſtroying the ſacred unity of brethrens; or by tempting the father, and the ſon, to riſe up in acts of blood againſt each other.

The other calamities experienced by the French, have ſprung from the deſtruction of their eccleſiaſtical conſtitution. Through its deſtruction, a much looſer rein, than they had before felt, has been given to them in all their modes of living. Deceit and fraud, have ceaſed to be accounted criminal: perjury has become general; and, if not a faſhionable practice, at leaſt one to which no French patriot of faſhion is a

ſtranger. Add to theſe things, that innocent blood, the ſight of which uſed to appal the hearts of Frenchmen, now appears to them, through the new lights which they have obtained, a thing which ought never to be permitted to affect the manly breaſt of a republican.

Should any one wiſh to enumerate fully the calamities of the French, he will not find the taſk difficult, although he may find it tedious.—He will have to point out their weakneſs and abſurdity, in hoping for a new line of national conduct, without previouſly effecting a ſuitable change of national principles and habits. He will have to ſtate, that their Revolution has turned their thoughts from the concerns of their families, peaceful occupations, and contentment with their lot; to the ſtudy of politics, the proſecution of war, and the love of conquſt: that it has ruined the huſbandman, the manufacturer, the merchant, the mariner, the planter—above all—the artiſt, and thoſe belonging to the learned profeſſions—pettifoggers excepted; and, that, in the ruin of theſe, has been found the ruin of the public finances, and of public credit. He will have to add of their revolution, that it has ſtifled every ſentiment of loyalty: that it has ſown the ſeeds of baneful popular factions: that it has deſtroyed diſcipline both in their army, and in their navy: that it has taught

the ſoldiery, as the Revolutions at Rome uſed to teach the pretorian cohorts, that all authority depends on their will: that it has prepared for the eſtabliſhment of a deſpotiſm, ſuch as the Romans in their degenerate days experienced, firſt, by debauching the minds of the ſoldiery, and then by rendering limited monarchy contemptible, and democracy of all ſorts odious: that it has converted France, which, under its ancient ſyſtem of government, was an affluent and highly-poliſhed country, into a land of beggars, and of ruthleſs barbarians: in fine, that it has made her legiſlators, and miniſters, the ſcorn of enlightened ſtateſmen; and her inhabitants the ſport of fortune, and fit objects for a world's commiſeration.

——— *En quo diſcordia cives*
Perduxit miſeros!

Both heaven, and earth, ſeem about to declare againſt the French—heaven no longer willing to brook their daring impiety—the earth incenſed at their flagrant injuſtice. Already are we numbered among the avengers of the common cauſe of God and man. It was high time that we ſhould. "Formerly," ſays Mr. Burke, (addreſſing himſelf to his French correſpondent) "your affairs "were your own concern only. We felt for "them as men; but we kept aloof from them, "becauſe we were not citizens of France. But

"when we ſee the model held up to ourſelves, we "muſt feel as Engliſhmen, and feeling, we muſt "provide as Engliſhmen. Your affairs, in ſpite "of us, are made a part of our intereſt; ſo far at "leaſt as to keep at a diſtance your panacea, or "your plague. If it be a panacea, we do not "want it: we know the conſequences of un-"neceſſary phyſic. If it be a plague, it is ſuch a "plague, that the precautions of the moſt ſevere "quarantine ought to be eſtabliſhed againſt it."

I rejoice to hear that we are committed; at the ſame time that I entertain a juſt ſenſe of the horrors of war. But I rejoice, becauſe I am perſuaded, that, let the vigilance and the wiſdom of government, of parliament, and of the nation at large, ſuffer ever ſo little abatement, ſtill, if the French democracy endure, the Engliſh monarchy muſt come to an end; and, farther, becauſe it is a matter ſuſceptible of clear and ample proof, that, let the evils to be ſuſtained through means of a war, be fully as great as we can reaſonably expect them to be; ſtill, when weighed againſt thoſe that would reſult from ſubſtituting the French conſtitution for our's, it will be found, that they are by far the leaſt both as to number and to degree.

That the eſtabliſhment of the French ſyſtem in France, would lead to the ſubverſion of our's, will

readily be imagined, and admitted, by all who have meditated much upon the ſubject. Were their ſyſtem once eſtabliſhed among them, many communications between France, and England, would be kept open; ſome for wiſe national purpoſes; others for producing the fatal event which is here deprecated. The deceptious doctrine of *liberty* and *equality*, would be induſtriouſly, and generally propagated. The ignorant would receive it, becauſe they are ignorant; the wicked, becauſe they are wicked. Many would receive it becauſe they feel chagrin; more becauſe they are fond of novelty; and a few, perhaps, becauſe they really believe they can make it appear, that that vile chimera has been termed ſuch unjuſtly. Thus would the miſchief be extended to thouſands; while democratic enthuſiaſm, with the contagious nature of which men of obſervation are well acquainted, would reach and deeply affect millions.

Nor will any man, who knows the value of the mixed monarchy of England, heſitate to admit, that the loſſes to be ſuſtained by a war, muſt be leſs than thoſe which would flow from the overthrow of that much-admired ſyſtem. For he muſt be aware, that that ſame ſyſtem is the principal cauſe of the great, and growing proſperity and happineſs of our empire. He muſt be aware, that,

while the French colonies are greatly diſtracted, and well nigh ruined in their trade, in conſequence of their political ſyſtem; ours, in conſequence of our political ſyſtem, are highly tranquil, and experience ſucceſs in all their purſuits. He muſt be aware, too, that it is through their invaluable conſtitution, that the inhabitants of theſe iſlands feel themſelves, in ſpite of all the ſubtil arts of Frenchmen and French emiſſaries, ſecure enough in the enjoyment of their enviable lot; and able to look far beyond the boundaries of their dominions, without diſcerning any where, except in the polluted country of their ancient inveterate foes, the leaſt want of reſpect, or of reverence. Finally, he muſt be aware, that, for almoſt every thing that can comfort an Engliſhman's family; adorn his character; or ſoothe his honeſt pride; he is indebted to the grand political bequeſt made to him by his anceſtors of the laſt century.——If, therefore, you deprive us of our conſtitution, you deprive us of that which we ought to prize above all things.

But, will a war with France deprive us of our conſtitution? On the contrary, it will confirm us in the poſſeſſion of it. For it will ſerve to check the wild and ſanguinary career of the levellers and deſtroyers of that country: And if it do ſo, it muſt, while it procures for nations, in general, the high advantages of order and peace, enſure to the

Engliſh,

Engliſh, their glorious conſtitution, with its long train of benefits and bleſſings.

A conflict with France being the means of ſecuring ſuch important ends, it ought to be conſidered rather as a war in favour of every people that are in the world (the French themſelves by no means excepted) than as one againſt any particular people. It ought to be conſidered as a war, which, greatly beyond any mentioned in hiſtory, has for its object the attainment of good, and the prevention of evil. It ought, in fine, to be conſidered—not merely as that through which alone free, and affluent nations, may preſerve their liberty, and their property; but, alſo, as that through which only the reſt of the nations can become ſufficiently free, without firſt becoming extremely wretched. Through means of it, theſe leſs fortunate nations may find, what they cannot expect to find otherwiſe, an opportunity of rearing a conſtitutional edifice ſuited to their circumſtances—to their attainments, their wants, and their wiſhes.

But a war with France will coſt us much. Very true: ſo would one with the moſt inſignificant power in the world. Let it, however, be duly conſidered, whether, or not, the circumſtances of unanimity prevailing both in our councils, and

through-

throughout the nation, while the counſellors of the French worry one another, and they themſelves are actually embroiled in a civil war; of our colonies being firmly attached to the mother country, while thoſe of France are almoſt totally eſtranged from her; of our having Ruſſian fleets on our ſide, if the Ruſſians poſſeſs any good faith; of our having Spaniſh fleets on our ſide, if the Spaniards poſſeſs any ſpirit; and of our having the whole of the Dutch navy on our ſide, if the Dutch poſſeſs any faith, any ſpirit, or any ſober ſenſe of *their own intereſt*: let it, I ſay, be conſidered, whether, or not, the circumſtances of our being united both at home, and abroad, and having all the great powers juſt named—with, perhaps, all the reſt of Europe—on our ſide; while the French are diſunited both at home, and abroad, and are about to have all the above powers, perhaps all the reſt of Europe, if not the whole civilized world, againſt them; be ſuch as ſhould induce us to hope, that this war will be not merely ſhorter, leſs expenſive, leſs ſanguinary, and more glorious in its iſſue, than moſt former wars have been; but even ſo ſhort, ſo little expenſive, ſo little ſanguinary, and ſo very glorious in its iſſue, as to lead us to view the period of the commencement of it, as one well worthy of being claſſed with thoſe that have been ſet apart for public feſtivity and rejoicing.

To

To thoſe who, upon the termination of the war, may undertake to ſhew what the nation has gained, and loſt, by the events, and the iſſue of it; I would recommend by no means to omit placing, in the column of gains, THE ENGLISH CONSTITUTION IN CHURCH AND STATE. Whatever the expences of the war in men, or in money, may be, that important *item* ought to be aſſumed as a ſet off for part of them. Citizen Prieſtley, or Citizen Paine, or any other of the honorable men, who are in diſgrace here, or in baniſhment in France, may think that the part to be ſo ſet off, cannnot be too ſmall: while thoſe who reverence pure religion, and reſpect wiſe laws, will be of opinion, that it can hardly be too great. The good, and the bad, have always differed, and will for ever differ, in their judgments of things.

The preſervation of our glorious conſtitution, is certainly a ſufficient reaſon for Great-Britain's entering the liſts with France, or with any country under the ſun. But, ſhe has other weighty reaſons for doing ſo: ſuch as, the reſcue of a valuable ally from impending danger; the vindication of her own character; and the maintenance of the European balance of power*. Who needs

* See an excellent performance, entitled "Reaſons for preventing France from trampling upon all Europe, &c." by Dr. William Black.

to be told, how important our alliance with the Dutch may be to us, if at any time involved in a naval war; or, how great the danger is with which that people are now threatened? Who will deny that it is wiſdom in a nation, to hazard any thing, or every thing, in ſupport of their reputation for good faith? And who can fail of foreſeeing the deſtruction of the balance of power in Europe, if the French be permitted to retain the Auſtrian Netherlands?——That the French, if left to themſelves, will retain thoſe provinces, no one will doubt, who has attended to their motives in entering into the preſent conteſt, and to the principles upon which they have conducted it. Theſe reſemble, ſo cloſely, the principles upon which the Romans proceeded, at a certain period of their hiſtory, that, in order to ſhew what they are, I need only ſhew, in the words of Monteſquieu, what thoſe of the Romans were.

"The time proper for the Romans to ſeize upon the conquered countries, was not yet come: had they kept the cities they took from Philip, the Greeks would have at once ſeen into their deſigns: had they, after the ſecond Punic war, or that with Antiochus, poſſeſſed themſelves of lands in Africa, and in Aſia, they could never have preſerved conqueſts ſo ſlightly eſtabliſhed.

"It

"It was the intereſt of the Romans to wait till all nations were accuſtomed to obey, as free and as confederate, before they ſhould attempt to command over them as ſubjects, and to let them blend and loſe themſelves, as it were by little and little, in the Roman commonwealth.

"See the treaty, which they made with the Latins after the victory at the lake of Regillum; it was a principal foundation of their power. There is not the moſt diſtant hint in it of any ſubjection on the part of the Latins.

"This was a ſlow way of conquering; after overcoming a nation, they contented themſelves with weakening it; they impoſed ſuch conditions as conſumed it inſenſibly. If it recovered, they depreſſed it ſtill more, and it became ſubject, without a poſſibility of dating the firſt æra of its ſubjection."

If this nation have any thing, relative to hoſtilities againſt France, with which to reproach themſelves, it can be nothing but the circumſtance of their having ſo long delayed commencing them *. For it is notorious, that the French

* I ſpeak of a war with France (January 31) as if it were already begun. In doing ſo, I am guilty of an inaccuracy—of ſuch a one, however, as may be concealed through public events

French have long acted hoſtilely againſt us—if not openly, and by means of their fleets and armies; at leaſt covertly, and by means of their old infernal

events that may take place before theſe ſheets come from the preſs.—Ever ſince the French aſtoniſhed and alarmed mankind, by the adoption and the propagation of democratical principles, I have conſidered a conteſt with them as abſolutely neceſſary—having been of opinion, during all that time, that nothing ſhort of the overthrow of their conſtitution, could enſure the continuance of ours. And ever ſince they manifeſted their total diſregard of repeated profeſſions, and ſolemn promiſes, by their irruptions into Brabant, Germany, and Savoy, I have thought, that, unleſs the progreſs of their arms were arreſted, our national proſperity could not be prolonged; nor could our dominions be ſecured againſt defalcation. The French, by their conduct towards us, have furniſhed many ſolid reaſons for falling upon them. But, had they furniſhed none of this kind, ſtill their general deportment—their arrogance, and injuſtice towards other ſovereign powers, would have afforded more than a ſufficient ground upon which to attack them.—Miniſters, I underſtand, ſincerely lament the neceſſity which there is of interrupting the bleſſings of peace. According to my notion of things, they would have infinitely more reaſon to lament any neceſſity that might be impoſed on them, of not giving a ſhort interruption to thoſe bleſſings. Viewed by itſelf, peace is a great good: viewed by itſelf, war is a great evil. Yet there are times when this evil is more to be deſired than that good. The preſent is preciſely ſuch a time. Would an individual, endowed with large and valuable poſſeſſions, evince his good ſenſe by refuſing to ſpend a little to-day, in order to preſerve every thing from ruin to-morrow? The caſe of a nation reſembles, in this reſpect, that of an individual.

inſtru-

inſtrument, intrigue—in the uſe of which they are far more expert than Philip of Macedon ever was. Their ſyſtem of intrigue, I ought in paſſing to obſerve, has at length acquired a new character. It admits, indeed, as formerly, of bribing and plotting: but then, its object is to diſtract, and ruin whole nations; not to diſconcert, and unhinge particular governments.——Such, in a word, has been the conduct of France towards England, that if I were not fully perſuaded, that the miniſter (who muſt be much better acquainted, than any private man can be, with the projects of our enemies, and alſo with the means through which they hope to execute their projects) will, in due time, make it appear, that an expreſſion of the public reſentment has been called for at the moſt proper of all ſeaſons; I ſhould regret that we had not ſooner had recourſe to the inſtruments which we are accuſtomed to employ againſt the foes of our religion, and liberty.

The iſſue of the war will convince the French, if it be poſſible to convince them, of the high value of our faculties and reſources.

It will make them feel acutely, the ſuperiority of our conſtitution, in church and ſtate, over their's. It will make them feel the ſuperiority of our civil

ſyſtem,

ſyſtem, which is one that diſpenſes a well aſcertained, uſeful freedom; not one that holds out boons which, like ſhadows, continually elude the graſp: It will make them feel, too, the ſuperiority of our religious ſyſtem, which is one that anxiouſly preſerves the intercourſe between heaven and earth, and thereby brings down upon us innumerable bleſſings; not one which, preſumptuouſly and madly cutting off that ſacred intercourſe, leaves man under the ſole guidance of his erring reaſon—the ſport of chance, and the mortal foe of man.—The events of the war will ſeverely rebuke the French, for having omitted to ſeize the golden opportunity that was preſented to them, upon the ſubverſion of their monarchy, of forming a conſtitution like ours (which had they done, no war, domeſtic, or foreign, would now have deſolated their country)—by forcing them to reflect, that, while our finances are very productive, theirs are very defective; that, while our commerce and manufactures flouriſh greatly, theirs rapidly decay; that, while our navy is in a vigorous and complete ſtate, theirs is in a ſtate feeble and unprecedentedly incomplete; that, while our colonies are loyal and proſperous, theirs are diſaffected and well nigh ruined; above all, that while, by obſerving a ſteady, moderate courſe in the government of our empire, we have acquired ſome valuable allies,

they,

they, by their frivolouſneſs and exceſſes, have driven from them every people who ſeemed at all diſpoſed to aid them in this hour of great peril; and have provoked, to bitter enmity, all whom they have ſo driven from them.

Our condition, and theirs, ſeem, at this juncture, the zenith, and the nadir of affairs. In no reſpect are they ſituated as we are. Some time, indeed, before they ventured to take up arms againſt mankind, Mr. Neckar had marked two particulars, with reſpect to which they, and we, were ſimilarly circumſtanced; namely, the ſums annually due by them, and by us, as the intereſt of public debts. But, even with reſpect to theſe particulars, they, and we have, for ſome years, ceaſed to be in a ſimilar predicament. While we have, through that beſt of meaſures, Mr. Pitt's Sinking Fund Bill, been punctually allotting a million ſterling *per ann.* to the reduction of our national debt; they have been adding millions, and tens of millions, to theirs;—inſomuch, that their financiers now reckon no millions of yearly ſurplus. They have, it is true, millions among even their monthly exceſſes. But all of theſe ſtand upon the wrong ſide of the account: they appear only in the liſt of *deficits*.

This is a lamentable condition for France (a belligerent power) to be in. But it appears doubly lamentable to those who advert to the state of her public credit. Nay, of her credit, as of her general prosperity, one must express himself in negative terms—she really has none. For no foreigner will trust her with a single *sous*. Her buckles, and her sleeve buttons are gone; and as confiscation has been carried to the *ne plus ultra*, assignats must forthwith become mere waste paper.

Nor are they useful things solely, of which, through her own misconduct, France is deprived. Such also as were wont to cheer her inhabitants, and please all mankind, have disappeared. Her courtesy, and endearing attention to strangers; her familiarity with the graces; and "all her "decent drapery of life;" are no more. "Other "nations," said M. Neckar, "have abandoned to "France, without jealousy, the empire of fashion." But even this empire, she has now unnecessarily, and imprudently relinquished; assuming, however, what befits her character quite as well—the contiguous empire of folly. Be it so. England must not repine, so long as she retains the empire of the ocean.

The

The Britiſh people are not merely more proſperous, at the preſent moment, than any other people; they are even more ſo than they themſelves ever were before. They are worthy of their proſperity. For they know how to enjoy it, as appears from their moderation; and, likewiſe, how to preſerve it, as is evident from the meaſures which they have recently adopted.

His Majeſty's late Proclamation againſt the ſeditious and profane, declares the vigilance, and the deciſion of government: and the ſubſequent co-operation of parliament, and of the great body of the people, with the executive power, demonſtrates their good ſenſe, and real patriotiſm.

Had not that Proclamation been iſſued; or, had the people treated it as THE FRIENDS OF THE PEOPLE wiſhed them to do, our conſtitution—our all muſt eventually have been loſt!——Thoſe falſe friends would have proceeded to very pernicious extremes; while their accomplices, THE FRIENDS TO THE LIBERTY OF THE PRESS, would have encouraged an unbridled licenſe in all kinds of political diſcuſſion. Prieſtley would have continued to preach againſt the eſtabliſhed church; and Paine to publiſh againſt the eſtabliſhed government; while the *reformers* of parliament, and the *protectors* of the preſs, would have diſplayed the

new lights prepared by them their harbingers, to shew mankind the road to ruin.

Matters now go on well. The wisdom of her rulers has frustrated the internal foes of England so completely, that liberty, property, and life, are in no hazard from their machinations. The efforts of our fleets will, I trust, soon baffle and confound her external foes: and, if we do not, by imitating the presumption of our foes, provoke surrounding powers to conspire against us; or, by imitating their impiety, tempt the Almighty to visit us with some of the more awful instruments of his wrath—with tempests, inundations, famine, pestilence, or earthquakes; our felicity as individuals, and our pre-eminence as a people, may experience no interruption.

In a condition such as that which we now enjoy, under circumstances naturally so productive of pleasing hope, and so very incompatible with any depressing passion; one would imagine that no British subject could have complained. No hand had appeared writing on the wall—that "The days of our empire were numbered." The complaints of my countrymen must, I think, have proceeded from that folly which uncommon prosperity engenders; and which Demosthenes had in his contemplation when he said, "The gods have

" decreed,

"decreed, that mankind, when ſucceſsful, never ſhall be wiſe." If they have proceeded from any other ſource, it muſt be—groſs ignorance of the actual ſtate of the nation. But, let them have proceeded from whence they may, it muſt be allowed that they are, conſidering the preſent circumſtances of the country, very inexcuſable, if not highly reprehenſible. Had they been heard at certain periods of the American war—at that afflicting period, when the Marquis Cornwallis and his troops were forced to lay down their arms—one might have forgiven thoſe who uttered them; nay, he might even have been able to forgive the hazardous expedients propoſed for the removal of the ſuppoſed cauſes of them. But, as they have been heard in an hour of profound peace, and of unexampled national ſucceſs, and reſpectability; in an hour in which that ſame noble commander has been ſpreading joy over his native land, by the news of his ſplendid victories, and rich conqueſts; as they have been heard in ſuch an hour as this, one cannot poſſibly refrain from condemning thoſe who have uttered them—nor can he help feeling the greateſt aſtoniſhment at the wickedneſs of thoſe wild ſpeculators, who would remove the ſuppoſed cauſes of them, by adminiſtering, at a criſis the moſt delicate, a remedy ten thouſand times more miſchievous than the pretended diſeaſe.

I muſt

I muſt not exhauſt your lordſhip's patience, by immoderately ſwelling out this letter.

Enough has now been ſaid to convince thoſe who are at all acquainted with hiſtory, and the ſcience of juriſprudence, that this is not a proper time for making alterations in our ancient, well-conſtructed conſtitution in church and ſtate; and that, if we do imprudently attempt to make any alterations in it, we muſt beware of copying from the crude, chaotic maſs of a neighbouring nation; having good ground for concluding, both from reaſon and experience, that, that which they deem their greateſt wiſdom, is, by no means, of equal value with that which our innovators term our greateſt fooliſhneſs.

As for you, my lord, and all others who are profoundly verſed in hiſtory, and in the ſcience of juriſprudence, you know that enough was ſaid, a full century ago, to ſave one the trouble of ſhewing, that no conjuncture can be ſuch as to warrant Engliſhmen in taking to pieces the matchleſs fabric which was then beſtowed on them; much leſs to juſtify them in parting with it, i. e. with limited monarchy, for the ſake of embracing unlimited democracy.

With regard to the bulk of the nation, I am perſuaded, that they are very indifferent about any

change

change whatever being introduced into our political ſyſtem. They certainly do not deſire to ſee any ſuch thing as a ſudden, violent one. But, were a change to be countenanced by the legiſlature, and the public, at this criſis, it would undoubtedly be of that deſcription: and if ſo, perſons of revolutionary appetites would be in a fair way of having them gratified.——Britons, however, do not wiſh for the inconceivable horrors of a violent revolution; and, therefore, they will not tolerate meaſures through which they might be occaſioned.

We ought to pray to God, that we may always be preſerved from ſuch a revolution. That we ſhall be preſerved from ſuch a one a long time, there are many ſubſtantial reaſons for hoping. We ſhall be ſo, becauſe there are among us many traders, who are willing to reap the profits of their trade; and many men of landed property, who are deſirous of continuing to enjoy their property themſelves, and of tranſmitting it to their poſterity;—becauſe there are among us, a vaſt number of moderate men, who reſpect moderation; of humane men, who love humanity; of virtuous men, who admire virtue; of religious men, who venerate religion; of conſcientious, honorable men, who wiſh good faith, and ſtrict propriety of conduct, to be obſerved both at home and abroad; and of affluent,

dignified men, who purpoſe to retain their wealth, and their diſtinctions;—becauſe, in fine, the Britiſh nation are tired neither of probity, nor of piety, nor of fame—nor yet of thoſe comforts, elegancies, and embelliſhments, which they poſſeſs in an eminent degree, and which ſo well befit their happy form of government, and the poliſhed ſtage of ſociety at which they have arrived. Theſe things they certainly never will exchange—either for the preſent comforts of anarchy, or for the future conſolations of atheiſm.

With all the reſpect due from a Britiſh ſubject, to one who is both able, and willing, to contribute greatly towards perpetuating the liberty, the proſperity, and the glory of the Britiſh empire,

I have the honor to be,

&c. &c.